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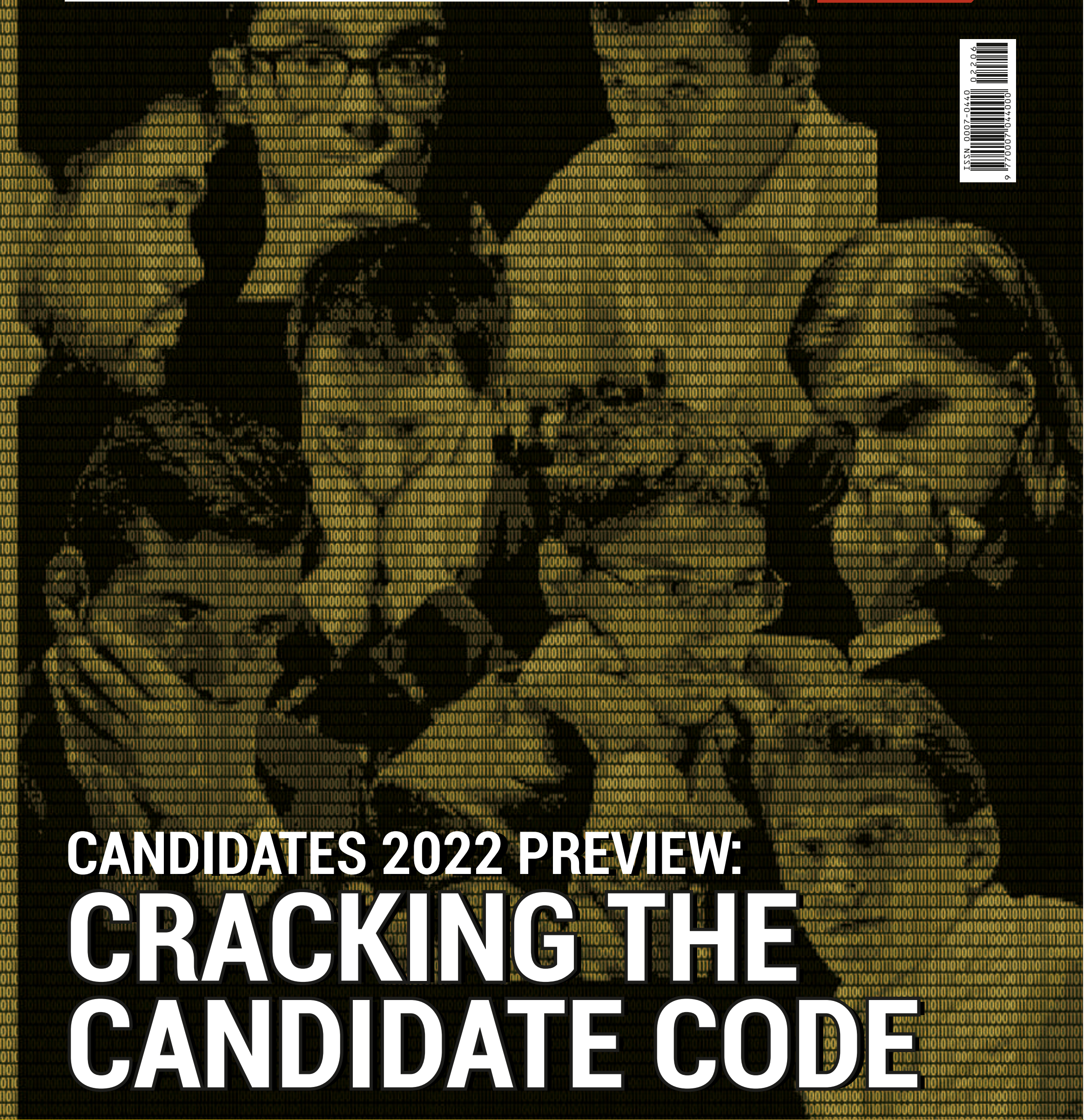
Volume 142
JUNE
2022
£5.50

ISSN 0007-0440



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BRITISH CHESS MAGAZINE
Founded 1881

www.britishchessmagazine.co.uk

Chairman Shaun Taulbut
Director Stephen Lowe

Editors
Milan Dinic and Shaun Taulbut

Photo editor
David Llada

Prepress Specialist
Milica Mitic

Photography
David Llada, FIDE official,
BCM archive, Wikipedia, Shutterstock

Advertising
Stephen Lowe

Enquiries
editor@britishchessmagazine.co.uk

ISSN 0007-0440
© The British Chess Magazine Limited
Company Limited by Shares
Registered in England No 00334968

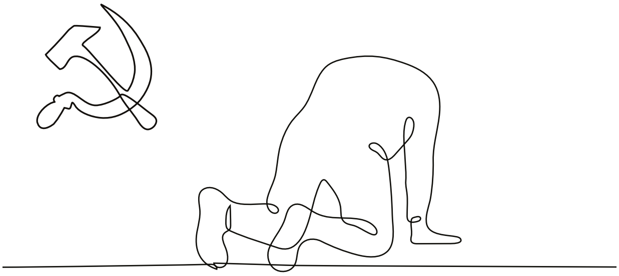
Postal correspondence:
Albany House, 14 Shute End
Wokingham, Berkshire RG40 1BJ

Subscription
support@britishchessmagazine.co.uk
12 monthly issues
UK: £55 | RoW: £85

Printed in the UK: by Lavenham Press Ltd

Cover photography:
David Llada, BCM

Contents



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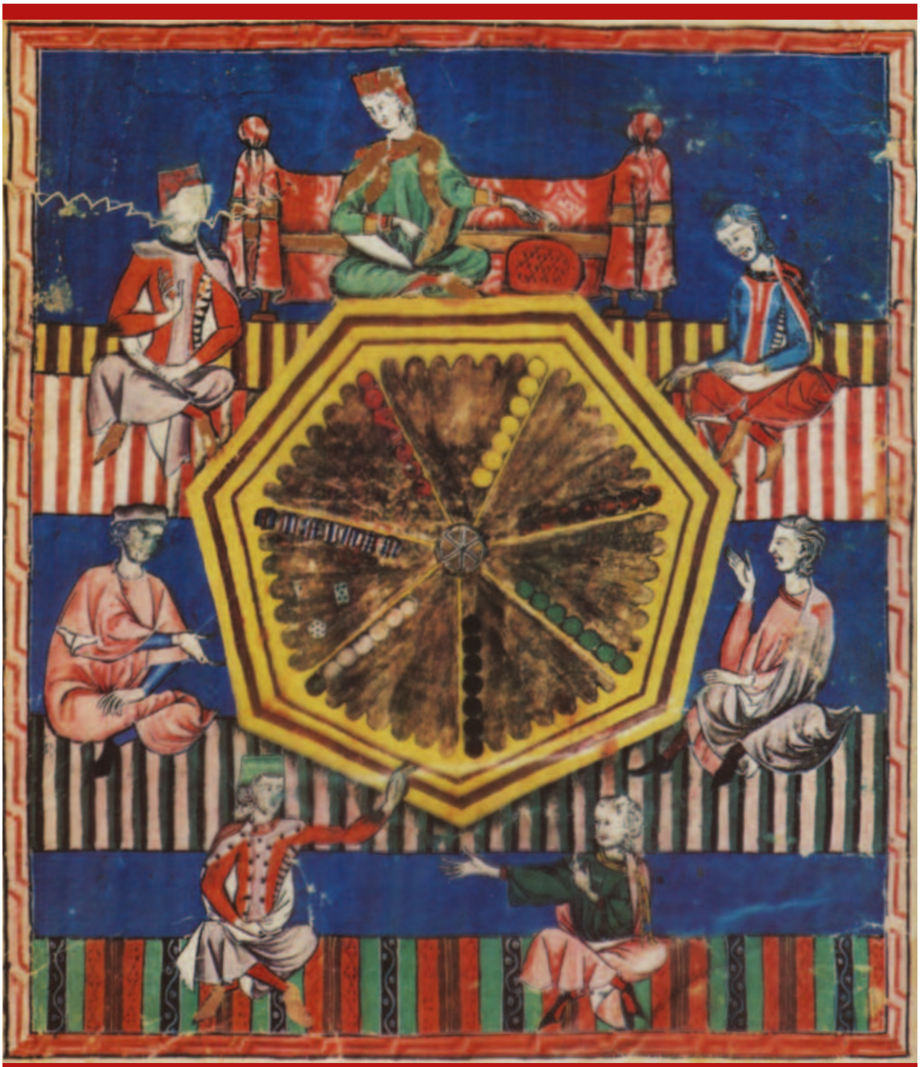
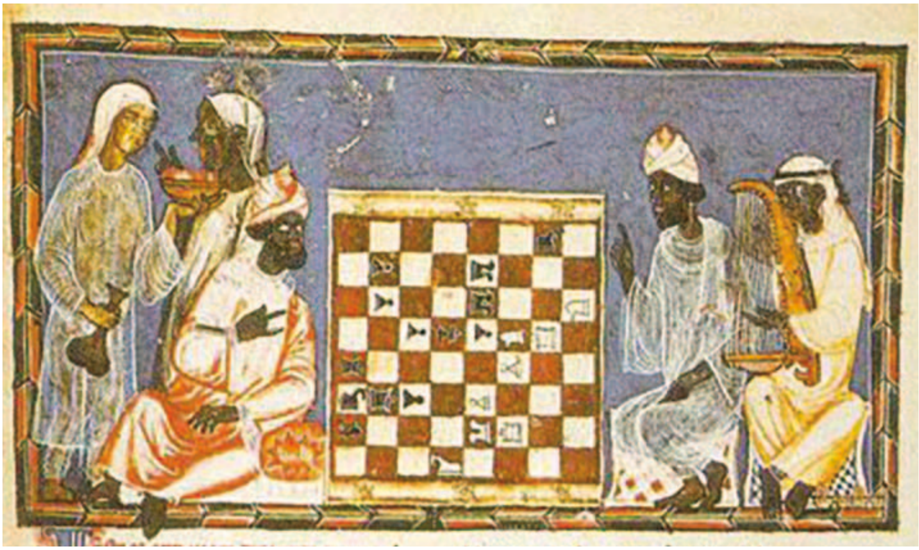


The game of astronomical tables, from Libro de los juegos

SPAIN IN CHESS HISTORY

By Peter O'Brien

The 2022 Candidates tournament is starting this month in the Spanish capital, Madrid. For years, Spain has been a host to a number of chess events and tournaments, and home to many of the world's strongest players. However, the roots and connections Spain has to the chess world go much deeper



Two Moors playing chess. Spanish manuscript illumination from
The Libro de los Juegos ("Book of games"), or Libro de axedrez, dados e tablas
("Book of chess, dice and tables"), around 1283

Some 30 years ago, I sat enthralled in a small Basque restaurant in the centre of Madrid while my friend International Master Dr Ricardo Calvo explained to me how crucial the city of Valencia had been in chess history. My knowledge of the subject was vague at best, so it did not take long before Ricardo's irrepressible enthusiasm, allied to his evident command of the field, convinced me that this wonderful country had been at the heart of things.

It is now 20 years since Ricardo's premature death. In this century the game has gone through more upheavals than in any period in its millennial progress. Scholarship on the history of chess has advanced immeasurably, while Spain itself has survived ever more external and internal upheavals to continue on its path of regaining its rightful place in Europe and the world. So, before the first moves are made, before Ruy Lopez once more leaves his imprint on the board, it's only fitting that we take a snapshot of where we are today on that film reel stretching back a long time.

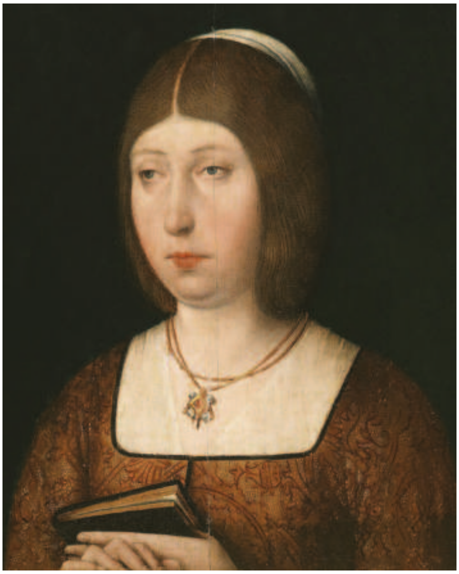
Chess was imported into Europe. And since the Mediterranean was the sea on which knowledge was carried from Asia, the territories now known as Spain and Italy were pivotal to imports. In retrospect, maybe the city-state of Venice would appear as the most likely port of entry. But that is not what happened. Why? Although Venice was exceptionally cosmopolitan from early times, it remained governed by local people. In the starkest terms, chess came into Spain because part of the Muslim world physically made southern and eastern Spain its home. The original immigration dates back more than 1300 years and it was extensive.

In the thirteenth century the famous King Alfonso X of Castilla y Leon, known also as Alfonso el Sabio for his manifold contributions to cultural and intellectual life, commissioned a book called "El Libro de los Juegos", published in 1283, a little before the King's death. This would seem to be the first book on chess in Europe. The text in fact covered a series of different games, as the title indicates, but extolled the great virtues of chess compared with the others. Even if Alfonso's achievement were the only one in Spain's history, that would already be colossal. But in fact it was just the beginning of the story.

Over time, the game did acquire a hold, especially in the Valencia region. One of the products was chess literature of which the major piece was the famous “Scachs del Amor” (1474). This long poem, written by three authors (Castellvi, Fenollar and Vinyoles), who were friends of King Ferdinand, himself well versed in chess, had a specific political purpose. The aim was to transform one of the pieces into an all powerful queen. What greater tribute and declaration of love could there be than this poem?

The form of chess that entered Spain n the early 700s was, unsurprisingly, very different to that which the eight candidates will be playing now. Among the many differences, there is one which merits particular attention. The pieces in the original form included one generally called the Vizier. As the name implies, this piece was conceived as a counsellor, an adviser, to the King. His scope of movement on the board, however, was not great. Now it was precisely the transformation of this piece which made such a dramatic transformation to the game, and where Spain’s own history could well have played a major role. The Vizier became today’s Queen, with almost unrestricted scope to travel across the board.

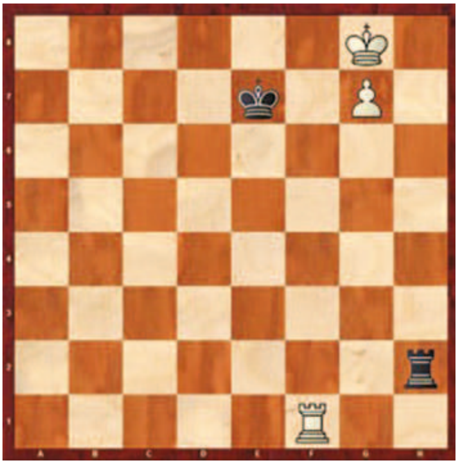
This startling change is, in some interpretations of chess history, attributed to the presence of one of the most famous persons in Spanish history, Isabella of Castilla. Her marriage to Ferdinand of Aragon (a few years before “Scachs d’Amor” was published) effectively marked the beginning of what has been the highly traumatic history of modern Spain. Not only did this step towards unification sow the seeds of tragic internal confllcts, but it also produced a drastic reshaping of Spain’s place in the world. It was Isabella herself who signed the documents that, after the conquest of Granada, provoked the flight of Arabic and Jewish communities. She agreed to support the voyages of Columbus to the Americas.


Isabella of Castilla
(1451 – 1504)

Think for a moment. There are not many other cases where a woman has wielded such power, and certainly not that far back in history. Eleanor of Aquitaine had earlier enjoyed considerable power, yet her second marriage to King Henry the Second of England brought severe curbs to that power. Other women were having substantial influence at different times and places. Yet Isabella was seen to be in charge and was at the centre of breathtaking decisions (good and bad). The current chess anatomy has the queen simultaneously protecting the monarch and being a prime mover in forcing the surrender of the opposing king. True, the Queen is supported by the rest of the army – but it is her army. Can we say, then, that Isabella of Castilla was the first European example of what is happily becoming a much more frequent situation today? And can we say that the changed role of the Queen on the chessboard reflects what happened then?

Towards the end of the 15th century the Spanish monk, Ruy Lopez de Segura, gave his name to an opening system which can justifiably lay claim to being the most famous of all - the Ruy Lopez, or the Spanish game (as it is called in several languages). But there was also a second person who links us back to Ferdinand and Isabella. A key ambassador for the King had been the father of Lucena. This man was himself interested in chess and had, it would seem, used some of his time on diplomatic missions in France and the Italian States to collect what chess material he could from those places. All of us have learned the famous Lucena method for certain rook endings. These conceptual efforts still preceded practice in Italy. The exceptional theoretical developments driven, among others, by Greco (il calabrese) and the schools of Modena only came through from 16OO onwards. Thus Spain can justly claim to be, in the context of Europe, the place where, until the last three centuries, chess effectively had its home.

The Lucena position



A cursory glance at how chess spread towards the North and the centre of Europe strongly suggests a correlation between decisive social and economic change and the introduction of chess into society. Given the tribulations of the histories of Spain, its regions and its overseas empire, it appears as no surprise that the chess histories of the 18th and 19th centuries are mostly dominated by other places. A search for significant chess tournaments with an international flavour organised in Spain, not to mention the presence of Spanish players, comes up with little to report.

Yet in the early years of the 20th century, San Sebastian was the home, in 1911 and 1912, to two international tournaments, of which at least the first must rank as one of the strongest ever. Its 15 competitors were headed by Capablanca and the list contained a very high percentage of the world's best players. In 1912 there were 13 participants and their overall strength was a little below the preceding year (yet still exceptional). Neither of the events featured a Spanish player (this could be somewhat debated though as Capablanca was the son of a Spanish army officer, José María Capablanca, and a Spanish woman from Catalonia, Matilde María Graupera y Marín). Indeed, during the century that has elapsed since then, no Spanish player has reached a candidates level final. Involvement in the game has made incredible strides in Spain (the progress among children ranks with any place in the world), but the top echelon presence is yet to be attained.

It was during the 1940s that international tournaments in Spain came alive, due to its neutrality in WWII. Keres was first at Madrid 1943, Alekhine first at Gijon 1944 and Madrid 1945, Najdorf first at Barcelona 1946.

The history of Spain and the country's prolonged political isolation from many international circuits meant that international chess did not figure for a very long time. But in 1968 and 1970, somehow uncannily paralleling events in San Sebastian more than

Participants of the 1911 San Sebastian tournament

The Kasparov – Karpov match for the title of World Champion, Seville 1987
(Source: Kasparov.com)

PDF NEWSPAPERS and MAGAZINES: WWW.XSAVA.XYZ

KASPAROV
POLGAR
Andalucia

Garry Kasparov and Judit Polgar, Linares, 2001

half a century earlier, two massively strong events were organised in Palma de Mallorca. As a gauge of that strength, suffice it to say that the first was won by Korchnoi and the second (which was also an Interzonal) was won by Fischer, and that on neither occasion did that marvellous player (then at his peak) Bent Larsen manage to get within two points of the winner. The Balearic island then staged another key world event, namely a world championship candidates match between Portisch and Petrosian, before it too, as San Sebastian 100 years previously, disappeared from the map of major chess venues.

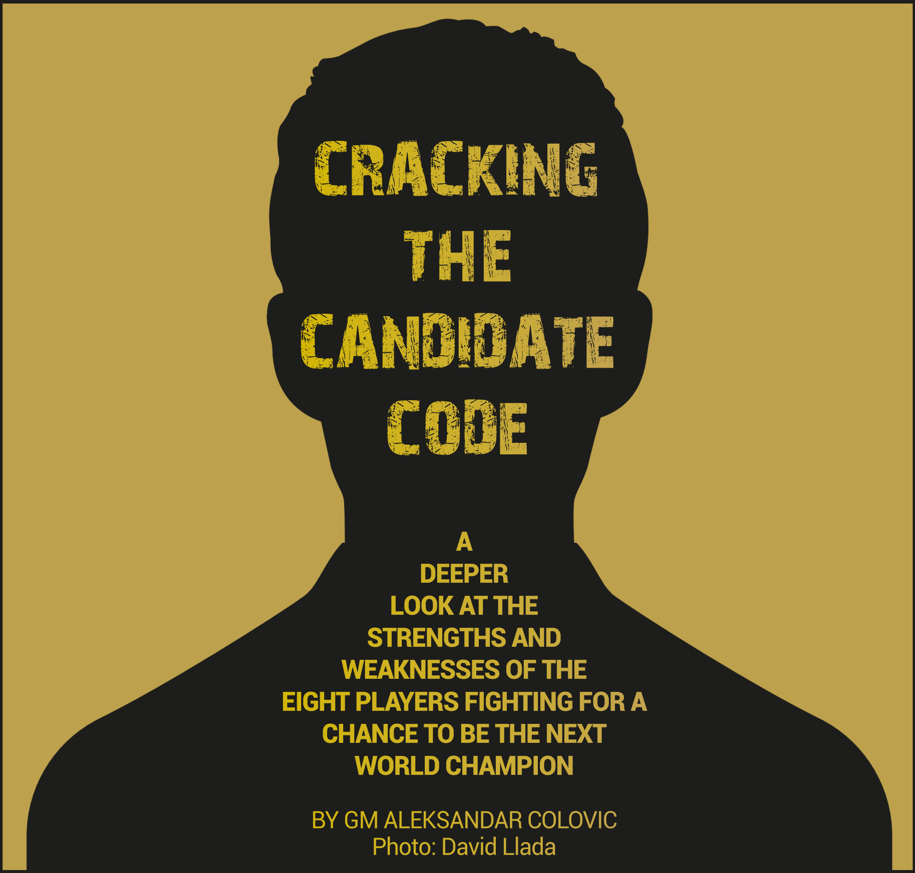
More recently, though, Spain has sought to be back at the centre. The Andalucian city of Linares organised no fewer than 27 world-class events from 1978 to 2010. In that period, no player expecting to be treated as one of the world's elite could afford to have a CV in which Linares was missing. Both Leon and Bilbao have regularly organised match tournaments with just a small number of participants but again where the level has been of the best. Sevilla staged one of the epic struggles between Kasparov and Karpov for the world title.

Notice the places mentioned. In Spain neither Madrid (until now, with the Candidates) nor Barcelona have been the venues for the very top tournaments. Instead, the locations have swung from the Basque country to Andalucia, from Castilla-Leon to the Balearic islands. This geographic diversification is undoubtedly a reflection of Spain's own rich diversity. A quick survey of other countries in Europe where significant chess tournaments have taken place in recent decades shows far more geographic focus on the capital cities, whether we are talking of Germany, Holland, France, Hungary or elsewhere.

Chess is meant to exercise our minds, and that through an adversarial structure. As Emmanuel Lasker ceaselessly emphasized, and demonstrated in practice, that challenge ultimately brings in a wide range of skills and attributes, some fairly obvious, others much less evident. Spain as a country does the same – it poses crucial questions to which Spain itself, and the rest of the world also, must forever try to find answers. In its greatly tormented history, this country has had to constantly try and manage fractures, cope with external threats and external disdain, embrace diversity yet not smother identities, work out systems and variations which are simultaneously robust and flexible, and encourage its citizens to live together as expressed by the FIDE motto "Gens Unus Sumus".

Ojalá que tengamos éxito
(Lets hope we succeed).

CANDIDATES 2022 PREVIEW:



CRACKING THE CANDIDATE CODE

A DEEPER LOOK AT THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE EIGHT PLAYERS FIGHTING FOR A CHANCE TO BE THE NEXT WORLD CHAMPION

BY GM ALEKSANDAR COLOVIC

Photo: David Llada

The most important tournament of the year, the one that will reveal the name of the next Challenger, will be held in Madrid from 17 June to 5 July. Let's take a look at the completed list of the players and evaluate their chances.

I say the *completed* list of players, because there was still a theoretical chance for the Ethics and Disciplinary Commission to overturn its decision to ban Sergey Karjakin for six months for his war-mongering social media activity. As expected, it didn't, so Ding Liren took his place as the highest-rated player on the rating list.

We will see whether Karjakin will up the ante and go to CAS (The Court of Arbitration for Sport) to seek a reversal, but even if he does it will be too late for the Candidates. On the other hand, if he does, it will be an unprecedented event in the chess world and a curious situation to see FIDE defending its Commission's decision.

Leaving politics aside, let's turn our attention to the players.

THE COMEBACK OF DING LIREN

Ding Liren was inactive for the vast majority of the pandemic. When the chance caused by the Karjakin situation appeared, he was required to play 28 rated games by the end of April in order to be eligible to qualify for the Candidates on the basis of rating.

The Chinese federation took swift action and organised three events for their best player. The first was a quadruple round-robin in Hangzhou with GMs Bai Jinshi (2593), Li Di (2579) and Xu Xiangyu (2564). The final score was: Ding Liren 10.5 out of 12, the rest of the players all on 4.5, having drawn all the games among themselves. Ding Liren beat all his opponents with the score 3.5-0.5 and won 11 rating points in this event.

The second event was a six-game match, again in Hangzhou, with the 22-year-old Wei Yi. After five draws Ding Liren won the last game and with it the match with the score 3.5-2.5.

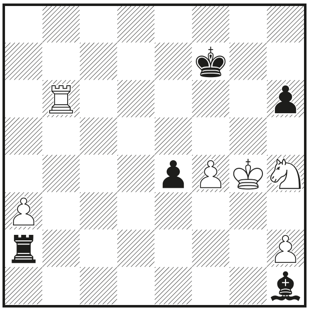
The third event was still in Hangzhou, a nine-round team event where Ding Liren won three games and drew the rest. His total rating gain from these three events was seven points, enough for a rating of 2806 and a world number two spot.

The Chinese federation supported its player with the organisation and the player did what he had to do to have another shot at the highest title. While there is no doubt in this author's mind that Ding Liren deserves to be in the Candidates, some doubts do linger about the execution of the necessary steps.

Here's a fine example of Ding Liren's persistence.

Ding Liren – **Xu** Xiangyu

China HangZhou GM 2022 Hangzhou CHN (2.2)



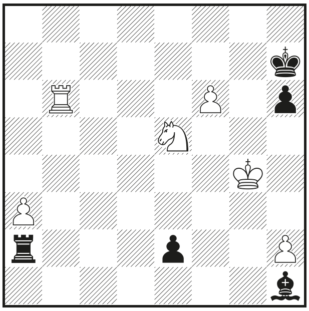
On the previous moves White was giving checks on b7 and b6. Objectively the game should end in a draw, as Black's e-pawn is very dangerous, but Ding tries his last chance.

60.♘g6! Trying to organise an attack with all the remaining forces.

60...e3 61.♘e5+ ♔g7 62.f5 e2?? Black completely neglects White's idea. Even visually, it is obvious that the king shouldn't be able to survive the attack of all White's pieces.

62...♖g2+ was the simplest, as White's wing doesn't have a good place to go to. 63.♔h3 *(63.♔f4 ♖f2+ 64.♔xe3 ♖xf5 eliminates the dangerous pawn with a draw in view of the very reduced material left on the board)* 63...e2 64.f6+ ♔h7 65.♖b7+ ♔g8 66.f7+ ♔g7 and Black survives, with his own threat of ...e1♕ forcing White to go back with his rook to prevent it. After 67.♖b1 ♖g5 the knight will have to move from e5 to leave the pawn on f7 undefended or after 68.♖xh1 ♖xe5 69.♖e1 ♔xf7 the rook endgame is drawn; 62...♗d5 was another saving idea - the bishop controls the important squares e6 and f7.

63.f6+ ♔h7



64.♖d6 This also wins.

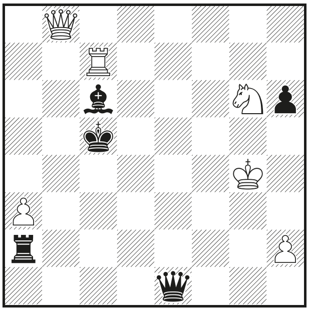
64.f7! was more forceful; after 64...e1♕ White had to see the sacrifice 65.♖xh6+! that leads to a forced mate after 65...♔g7 (or *65...♔xh6 66.f8♕+ ♔h7 67.♕f7+ ♔h8 68.♘g6#)* 66.♖g6+ ♔f8 *(66...♔h7 67.f8♘+ ♔h8 68.♘f7# is an incredibly beautiful and rare mating position!)* 67.♖g8+ ♔e7 68.f8♕+ ♔e6 69.♖g6+ ♔d5 70.♕d6+ ♔e4 71.♕d3+ ♔xe5 72.♕d6+ ♔e4 73.♖e6# with a pretty mating finale in the centre of the board.

64...e1♕ 65.♖d7+ ♔g8 66.♖d8+ ♔h7 67.♖d7+ Repeating moves to gain time, it's likely the players were playing with very little time left by this point.

67...♔g8 68.♖g7+ The correct check.

68...♔f8 69.♘g6+ Now White promotes with check and the attack continues.

69...♔e8 70.f7+ ♔d7 71.f8♕+ ♔c6 72.♕c8+ ♔b5 73.♕b8+ ♔c5 74.♖c7+ ♗c6



75.♖xc6+! A nicely calculated sequence by Ding.

75...♔xc6 76.♘e5+ ♔d5 77.♕b7+ Black resigned as he is forced to take the knight on e5 which will lead to the loss of his queen.

To illustrate: 77.♕b7+ ♔d6 78.♕c6+ ♔xe5 (or *78...♔e7 79.♕d7+ ♔f6 80.♕f7+ ♔xe5 81.♕e7+)* 79.♕e8+.

1-0

Ding Liren's games didn't show anything new with regard to his openings, which likely means that he kept all his preparation for Madrid.

His experience from Yekaterinburg was painful, but he did win the second leg of that unfortunate tournament. This time the event should be played under normal conditions, where Ding can hope to show his best and give China its first Challenger.

At 29, Ding Liren is at the height of his powers and unless the lack of practice during the pandemic threw him off balance, he is a serious candidate to win.

THE PERENNIAL FAVOURITE

Fabiano Caruana (29) is a perennial favourite when it comes to the Candidates. He is a regular since the 2016 event, when he lost the final-round game to Karjakin that decided the winner. Caruana won convincingly in 2018 but didn't show his best in Yekaterinburg; yet even there he fought for first and eventually finished in a shared third place.

There is one event that seriously affected Caruana since the end of the last Candidates. He parted ways with his long-time second GM Rustam Kasimdzhanov and, connected or not, his results started to become more uneven.

As everybody, during the pandemic Caruana put emphasis on faster time controls and raised his level significantly, but in classical chess he didn't have the same aura of solidity. For example, immediately after Yekaterinburg 2021 he finished on a minus score at the Superbet Classic and was then eliminated in the third round of the World Cup. Then he managed to tie for first in the US Championship, but his result cost him 10 rating points. His saving grace was the qualification from the Grand Swiss, where he shared second place.

This year he again started badly: only 50% in Tata Steel and a new loss of 11 rating points. These losses saw him drop out of the top three that he was so used to occupying. His fine win at the American Cup in April was immediately followed by a 50% result at the Superbet Classic in May.

This instability doesn't bode well for the American, but he is too experienced and knows what's needed to win a Candidates.

FABIANO CARUANA

ALIREZA FIROUZJA

Source: Facebook official page

In the last events Caruana experimented a lot in the openings, thus successfully hiding his preparation (a 1.e4 e5 player with Black, he even ventured the Sveshnikov!). If he manages to find an appropriate substitute for Kasimdzhanov and comes to Madrid in good form, Caruana can become the second player in history after Smyslov (who won back-to-back in 1953 in Zurich and 1956 in Amsterdam) to win two Candidate Tournaments.

ALL EYES ON FIROUZJA

Probably the whole world will have their eyes set on **Alireza Firouzja**. He will turn 19 at the start of the Candidates and will thus become only the third teenager to play a Candidates Tournament, after Spassky in Amsterdam in 1956 (also 19 at the time) and Fischer in Yugoslavia in 1959 at the age of 16.

Firouzja qualified by winning the Grand Swiss in convincing style. He ended 2021 furiously with an incredible eight out of nine and a tournament performance TPR of 3015 on the first board for France at the European Team Championship. These events propelled him to a rating of 2804, a world number two and making him the youngest player in history to pass 2800.

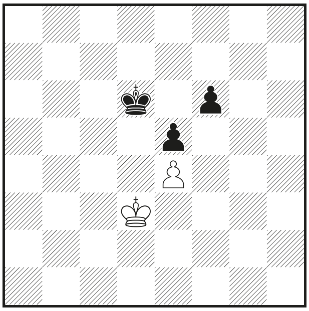
After these events the record-breaking prodigy took a prolonged break from classical chess of more than five months. His return wasn't up to his latest standards. At the Superbet Classic he ended on a minus score, losing 11 rating points and conceding the second spot in the world to Ding Liren.

In those five months he must have prepared extensively for the upcoming Candidates. It is also very likely that he was helped by GM Ivan Cheparinov, the main generator of opening ideas for the former World Champion Veselin Topalov. Cheparinov and Firouzja were photographed together in Romania during the Superbet Classic, so their cooperation is confirmed. With this in mind, we should expect opening bombs from the Iranian-born man in Madrid.

I find it difficult to evaluate Firouzja's chances. Purely chess-wise, he can beat anybody. However, there have been too many episodes in the past when the young player's nerves failed him. As a reminder, here's the most shocking one.

Alireza **Firouzja** - Magnus **Carlsen**

8th Norway Chess 2020 Stavanger NOR (9.1),



As every schoolboy knows, the rule of distant opposition saves the game easily for White. Firouzja has successfully shown that he knew this rule during the previous moves, but here, for reasons clearly explained as nerves, he cracks.

69.♔c3?? 69.♔d2 is a draw, of course.

69...♔c5

0-1

The only way to have a realistic chance of winning in Madrid is for Firouzja to have overcome these moments of complete breakdown. The Candidates is a high-intensity event that lasts for three weeks and the tension will rise with every single day. An ability to consistently withstand the tension and the pressure and to perform at the highest level under those circumstances is an absolute requirement for a Challenger. For me, the question is whether Firouzja will mature and obtain the inner force of character, or will he become the next Vasyl Ivanchuk. At 19, I still think it is too early to expect him to win.

THE INTRIGUING RICHARD RAPPORT

One of the most impressive recent feats of 'the passion that whips the blood when great stakes can be gained by resolute and self-confident daring' (Lasker) was **Richard Rapport's** decision to risk and continue the second game of his final match against Andreikin (26) in the Belgrade Grand Prix event.

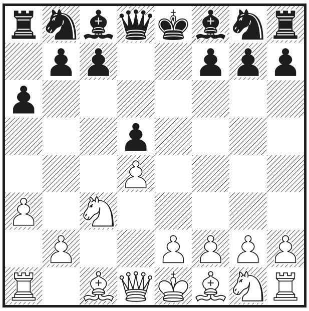
Here's a reminder of that fascinating game, as analysed in the April issue of BCM.

Richard **Rapport** – Dmitry **Andreikin**

Knockout | Belgrade FIDE Grand Prix
chess24.com (9.1)

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 a6 Andreikin relied on the Janowski Variation in the group phase when he drew with it against Shankland, but he has also played it in the many online events in the last period, so Rapport could prepare with a high level of probability of meeting it.

4.cxd5 exd5 5.a3!?



And here comes the surprise. As in the game with Vachier, we see Rapport surprising his opponent with a rare move. This time the surprise isn't as forcing as in the game with Vachier, but it does force Andreikin to start thinking from early on while Rapport could still follow his preparation.

5...h6 With such non-forcing moves as5. a3 Black can play anything he wants, but that is exactly why it is a good choice - Andreikin spent some time trying to figure out in which lines the move a3 makes a difference.

RICHARD RAPPORT

Source: FIDE Official

6.♗f4 ♘f6 7.e3 c5 Andreikin opts for active play, though the engine quite likes it.

7...♗d6 is an alternative plan that Black employs in this variation and it was quite viable here too. After 8.♗xd6 ♕xd6 9.♗d3 0-0 10.♘ge2 ♗e6 11.0-0 ♘bd7 we have a standard position for the variation.

8.♗e5 Rapport called this move over-ambitious. By threatening ♗xf6 White attacks the pawn on d5.

8...♗e6 9.♘ge2 White wants to put the knight on f4 to put more pressure on d5.

9...♘c6 10.♘f4 cxd4 Black creates an IQP for himself, but obtains active play in return.

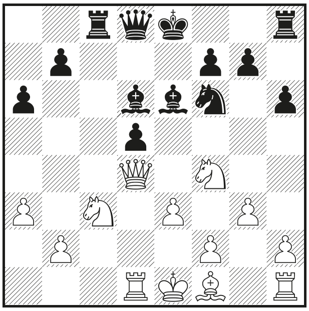
11.♗xd4 ♘xd4 12.♕xd4 ♗d6 Black has the pair of bishops and good play as White cannot stabilise his grip in the centre.

13.g3 Another ambitious move. White wants to develop the bishop to g2 to exert more pressure on the pawn on d5, but he delays his development for one more move.

13.♗e2 was the natural move. After, for example, 13...0-0 14.0-0 ♖c8 15.♖ad1 ♕c7 Black is fine as his control over the dark squares guarantees him against problems. Now taking on d5 leads to simplifications after 16.♘cxd5 ♘xd5 17.♘xd5 ♗xd5 18.♕xd5 ♗xh2+ 19.♔h1 ♗e5 with a likely draw.

13...♖c8 Black develops quickly, not spending time on castling.

14.♖d1?!



Rapport was critical of this move and rightly so as after Black's next move he is forced to move the rook again.

14.♘xe6 fxe6 15.♗h3 ♔f7 16.0-0 was a forcing line that allowed White to finish development, though Black is perfectly fine after 16...♖c4 17.♕d3 ♗e5 as his dark-squared bishop and the pawns on light squares fully complement each other. 18.♘e2

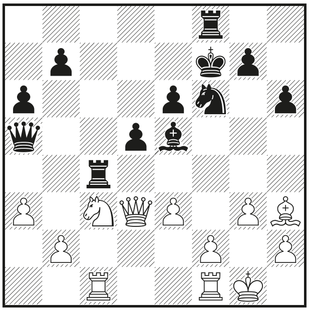
14...♕a5! Threatening ...♗xa3.

15.♖c1 Admitting the mistake. White defends the knight on c3, thus defending against ...♗xa3.

White could have taken on e6 again - 15.♘xe6 fxe6 16.♗h3 ♔f7 17.0-0 - though the same applies as in the previous note: Black is fine after 17...♖hd8 with a solid position in the centre.

15...0-0 16.♘xe6 Only now White takes, forcing Black to move the king again.

16...fxe6 17.♗h3 ♔f7 18.0-0 ♖c4 19.♕d3 ♗e5



So we have a similar position to the ones we mentioned in the comments above and the evaluation is the same - the position is balanced.

20.♘e2 White wants to transfer the knight to f4 to put more pressure on the pawn on e6.

20...♖fc8 Taking the pawn on b2 is bad: 20...♖xc1?! 21.♖xc1 ♗xb2? 22.♖b1 ♕xa3 23.♕c2 and suddenly the black king is under devastating attack after 23...♗e5 24.♖xb7+ ♔g8 25.♕g6 ♘e8 26.♕xe6+ winning the bishop on e5.

21.♖xc4 ♖xc4 22.b4 White removes the pawn from the attacked square with tempo but gives away some squares on the queenside.

22...♕a4 23.♘f4 By attacking the pawn on e6 White forces the exchange of his opponent's bishop for his knight.

23...♗xf4 24.exf4 ♕c6 Black still has a good game, his excellent centralisation assures against problems.

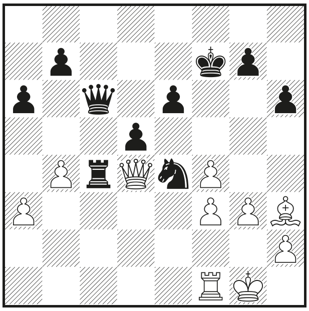
25.♕e3 White's only idea in the position is to attack the pawn on e6 with everything he has, including the pawn on f4 (by pushing f5).

25...♘e4 Black naturally shuts the e-file.

It was also possible to do so with tempo. In fact Rapport called this a simpler possibility for Black. 25...♖e4 26.♕d2 ♖c4 and White cannot do much except to repeat as 27.♖e1 ♘e4 28.♕e3 ♖c2! hitting f2 leads again to a repetition after 29.f3 ♖c3 30.♕e2 ♖c2

26.f3 ♖c3 27.♕d4 ♖c4 28.♕e3 ♖c3 Repeating moves...

29.♕d4 ♖c4

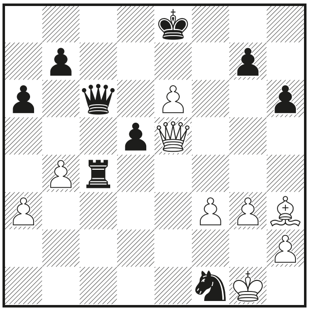


30.♕e5! From the initial 14 minutes Rapport had come down to two and he still decided to continue the game! A very brave decision as he could have claimed a three-fold repetition while, with little time left in a sharp position, he wasn't able to calculate all the variations. In his own words, he decided to take fate in his own hands and took a leap of faith. And from the many films we have seen, we know how these decisions turn out.

30...♘d2 31.f5! White goes for the attack.

31...♘xf1 Inserting the check was probably simpler as, after 31...♕b6+ 32.♔h1, ♘xf1 basically forces White to seek the perpetual after 33.fxe6+ ♔g8 34.♕b8+ *(34.e7? wins for White without the inserted check on b6 - see the comment to 32...♔g8 - but here it loses to 34...♘xg3+! 35.♔g2 ♖c2+! 36.♔xg3 ♕g1+ 37.♔h4 ♕g5+! 38.♕xg5 hxg5+ 39.♔xg5 ♖e2 when Black picks up the e-pawn with an elementary win.)* 34...♔h7 35.♗f5+ *(35.e7? even loses for White after 35...♘xg3+! 36.♕xg3 ♖c1+ when all of a sudden it is White's king who is mated)* 35...g6 36.♗xg6+! ♔xg6 37.♕e8+ and the king cannot hide from checks. But with little time neither player saw this variation.

32.fxe6+ ♔e8??



The decisive mistake, though a natural one.

32...♔e7 was the only move, but quite an improbable one - Black allows the capture on g7 with check. However, the point is that after 33.♕xg7+ ♔d6 the king is not constrained on the back rank. After 34.e7 ♕b6+ 35.♔h1 ♘xg3+! 36.♕xg3+, otherwise White loses. 36...♔xe7: the main danger of the passed e-pawn is eliminated and White has nothing more than a perpetual after 37.♕e5+ ♔f8 38.♕f5+ ♔e7 39.♕e5+; 32...♔g8? loses to 33.e7 ♔f7 *(it's too late for 33...♕b6+ 34.♔xf1 ♖c1+ 35.♔e2 ♕b5+ 36.♔d2 and there are no more checks and the rook on c1 hangs)* 34.♗f5! threatening e8♕ followed by ♗g6 or vice versa.

33.♕xg7 Now Black loses due to the bad position of his king.

33...♕b6+ 33...♕c7 34.♕g6+ ♔e7 35.♗xf1 wins for White - after picking up the knight he will return to attack the black king and push the e-pawn.

34.♔xf1 ♖c1+ 35.♔e2 ♖e1+ A practical attempt, but Andreikin was unlucky that White manages to get to the time control and then find the escape from the perpetual check. **36.♔xe1 ♕e3+ 37.♔d1 ♕d3+ 38.♔c1 ♕e3+ 39.♔b1 ♕d3+ 40.♔c1 ♕e3+ 41.♔b2** The time control passed and Rapport found the way to hide his king.

41...♕d2+ 42.♔a1! ♕c1+ 43.♔a2 ♕c4+ 44.♔b2 ♕e2+ 45.♔a1 ♕f1+ To give perpetual Black needs the f1-square so he can then give check from c4, but unfortunately there is a piece guarding that square...

After 45...♕d1+ 46.♔a2 ♕c2+ 47.♕b2 ♕c4+ 48.♔a1 the checks end.

46.♗xf1

1-0

This decision, to trust himself and Fate in a decisive moment, is a true sign of a strong character. But, as it turned out, Rapport didn't believe that he could qualify for the Candidates! He admitted this in a

JAN-KRZYSZTOF DUDA

later interview and as a result of this lack of confidence he made a decision that will seriously impact his chances in Madrid.

He accepted all tournament invitations.

It is highly motivated and prepared players who win these events. Rapport may be motivated, but it is unlikely that he will be well-prepared. With events lined up he won't have the time to prepare properly - he agreed to play in Norway, a tournament that finishes a mere six days before the start of the Candidates. Playing Carlsen and co. before an exhausting 14-round Candidates is not quite the best practice. Playing in Romania at the Superbet Classic wasn't a success either, as his final score of minus two (both losses with White due to big blunders) placed him at shared-last.

Rapport's second issue is that he is a self-confessed loner. He likes to work alone and finds it difficult to work with others. What he has achieved alone is incredible, but in order to climb the highest mountain players need teams - like it or not, the days of Fischeresque feats of 'one against the world' are gone and unlikely to return. Every single player who has qualified for a World Championship match has had a team that has supported him all the way. It would really be great to see Rapport find a support system to help him reach his full potential, but it seems that this won't happen for Madrid, which is a pity, as I would have really fancied to see the best he can offer.

Editor's Note: Soon after this article was submitted, news came out that indirectly confirmed the author's analysis. Richard Rapport decided to change his federation after accepting a sponsorship offer from Romanian Superbet. He also withdrew from the planned Norway Chess tournament to prepare better for the Candidates.

THE DARK HORSE FROM POLAND

The second-youngest player in the event is **Jan–Krzysztof Duda** (24). After securing his qualification by winning the World Cup in 2021 he only played in Wijk aan Zee at the beginning of the year, thus leaving plenty of time for thorough preparation. This approach makes him the 'dark horse' of the tournament. We could see the fruits of his preparation at the online events he participated in. At the Oslo Esports Cup, played at the end of April, we could see him change his repertoire with Black, using the Berlin against 1.e4 and the Grunfeld against 1.d4. It is safe to assume that he was testing these new openings against tough opposition to have them battle-ready for Madrid.

Duda's win of the World Cup propelled him to the elite: few players have managed to win a World Cup. Don't forget that he eliminated Carlsen in the semi-final! This means that he can withstand tension for a prolonged period, which says a lot about his nervous system. Good nerves, good preparation and with a touch of luck good form can be the magic formula for Duda in Madrid.

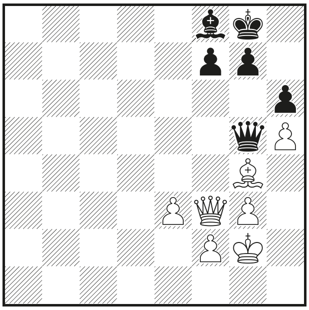
A SECOND CHANCE FOR NEPO?

The most recent Challenger, **Ian Nepomniachtchi** (31) has a historic chance to become the second player in history (after Smyslov) to win two Candidate Tournaments in a row. And I just don't see him doing it.

It was great to see Nepomniachtchi come back with good results after his débacle in Dubai, albeit these came in faster time controls. He only returned to classical chess at the Superbet Classic in May, but here he was sub-par: a minus score and loss of seven rating points. But what's more important is that he again showed the same weaknesses as in the match with Carlsen - the inability to withstand long tortures in inferior, but holdable positions.

Wesley **So** - Ian **Nepomniachtchi**

Superbet Classic 2022 Bucharest ROU (4.1)

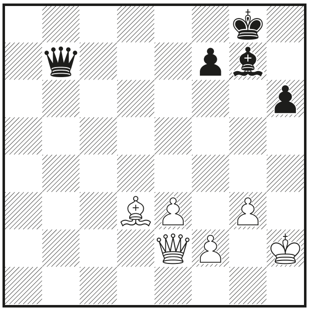


Both players were moving around for some time, but here Nepomniachtchi loses his patience and weakens his structure.

44...g6?! This only makes Black's defence more difficult. From a practical aspect, it was easier to keep the structure as it was.

For example: 44...♕f6 45.♕e4 *(45.♕xf6 gxf6 is an immediate draw as White cannot possibly make progress)* 45...♕e7 and so on, shuffling the queen around and waiting for White to advance.

45.hxg6 ♕xg6 46.♗f5 ♕f6 47.♕d5 ♕d6 48.♕c4 ♕b4 49.♕e2 ♕b7+ 50.♔h2 ♗g7 51.♗d3!



Objectively Black should still draw, but White can operate with several ideas: apart from the plan of advancing the pawns he can also try to establish a battery on the b1-h7 diagonal, for example with ♕h5-f5.

51...♕d5 Black prevents ♕h5.

52.♗c4 ♕e4 53.♗b3 Again threatening ♕h5, this time hitting the pawn on f7.

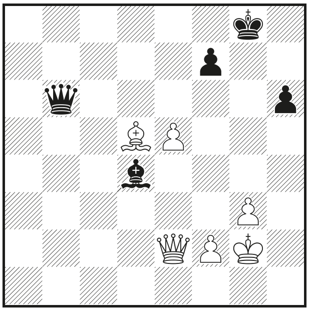
53...♕f5?! Allowing White to advance with tempo. These small concessions accumulate and make Black's defence more difficult. It was better to move the queen to g6.

54.e4 ♕f6 55.♔g2 ♕b6 56.♗d5 ♗d4? The decisive mistake. Black allows his bishop to be cut off from the kingside.

IAN NEPOMNIACHTCHI

Staying passive was better: 56...♕g6 57.e5 ♗f8 58.f4 ♔g7 when the game will last for a very long time, an unenviable task against a technical player like So, but at least objectively Black should still be able to draw.

57.e5!

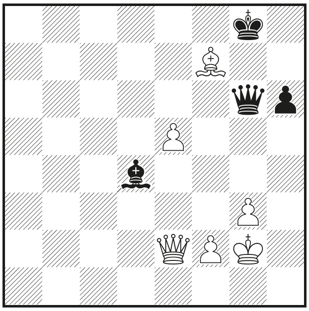


Now White threatens a direct attack with ideas like e6 and ♕f3.

57...♕g6? Allowing an immediate finish.

57...♔f8 was an attempt to run away from the danger zone, though White still wins after 58.♕e4! ♔e7 *(58...♗xf2? 59.♕f5 with the double threat of mate on f7 and attack on the bishop on f2)* 59.♕f3, hitting the pawn on f7. White wins by combining threats on both sides of the board, with the unfortunate bishop on d4 being the victim. 59...♕g6 60.♕a3+ ♔d8 *(60...♔e8 61.♕a4+* picks up the undefended bishop*)* 61.♕a8+ ♔e7 62.♕b7+ ♔e8 63.♗xf7+! ♕xf7 64.♕b8+ ♔e7 65.♕d6+ ♔e8 66.♕xd4 with an easily winning queen endgame with two extra pawns. In this line at least White would have been forced to work harder; with the game move Black allows this queen endgame immediately.

58.♗xf7+!



HIKARU NAKAMURA

Source: Facebook official page

58.♗xf7+ ♔xf7 *(58...♕xf7 59.♕g4+* wins the bishop on d4.*)* 59.♕c4+ ♕e6 60.♕xd4 with an elementary win.

1-0

This game shows that even after analysing the reasons for his loss in Dubai Nepomniachtchi didn't manage to cover his weak spot. Madrid will show whether he manages to find the strength to withstand a gruesome 14-round tough tournament - in the past he has always cracked in longer events, dropping his level and spoiling his chances.

Nepomniachtchi is still reaping the fruits of his extensive pre-match preparation and this will likely help him in Madrid. But it will be his nerves and stamina that will determine his final result.

THE 'UNLIKELY' HIKARU NAKAMURA

The unlikely winner of the Grand Prix series is also an unlikely winner of the Candidate Tournament. **Hikaru Nakamura** (34) showed incredible resilience, similar to what he regularly shows in the blitz and rapid events he constantly plays online, and this was the main chess-related reason for his success.

The second reason was psychological. Nakamura no longer feels the pressure to perform, achieve and earn money. He found his calling in the online world of chess streaming and blitz chess, where he thrives. Already a millionaire and financially secure for life, Nakamura can play just for the sake of playing well. His natural ability coupled with his lack of nervousness meant that Nakamura was unbeatable in Berlin.

This psychological stability will be his main strength in Madrid. He will supplement it with good opening preparation. His staple defences of QGD and Berlin with Black will be refreshed with new ideas, possibly adding a new opening against 1.d4, like the QGA that he played in the second leg in Berlin. With White his serve-and-volley approach (of hitting his opponent hard in [semi-] forced variations with new ideas) can be dangerous and will likely remain his preferred way in his White games.

TEIMOUR RADJABOV

All of the above makes Nakamura a formidable opponent, but it seems to me that he doesn't really have the ambition or will to win. The above-mentioned psychological stability also means that he is not forced to 'bite', making him inferior to more hungry and driven opponents.

What will a win in Madrid mean to Nakamura? An upcoming match with Carlsen, a player he famously suffers against in classical chess (14 losses and only one win) that will require months of tough preparation and removal from his usual streaming and online blitz-playing activities that he likes so much. Maybe it's possible to look at it from another aspect, to stream all his preparation process and the match to his viewers, but I still find this difficult to believe.

I really liked Nakamura's play in the Grand Prix and I am looking forward to seeing him play again serious chess in Madrid, but I doubt he has good chances of winning.

THE 'SCARRED' TEIMOUR RADJABOV

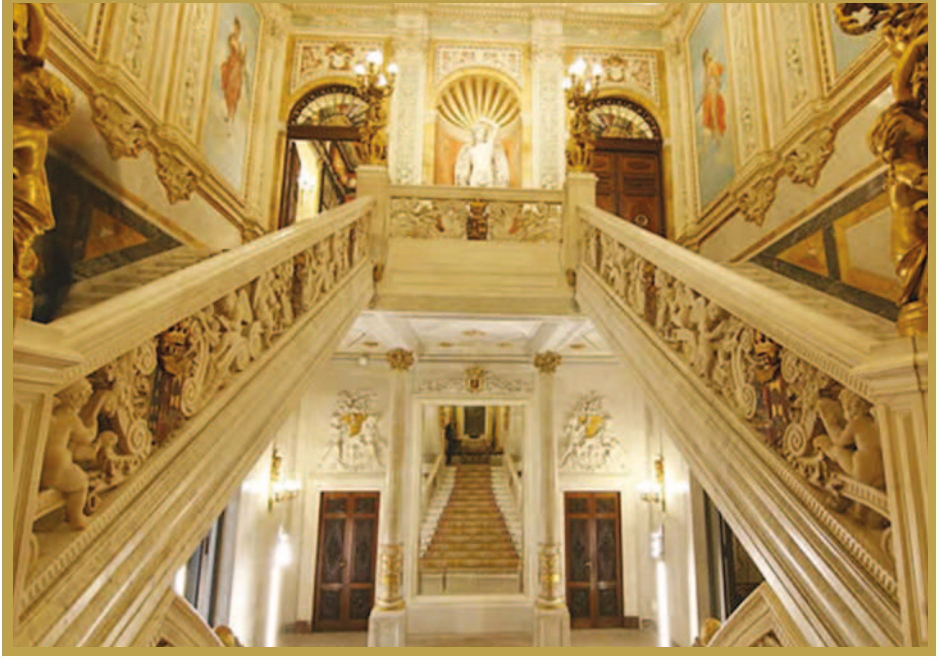
A player with the least chance of winning is **Teimour Radjabov** (35).

He shouldn't even have played in Madrid - he got there because of his decision not to play in Yekaterinburg, correctly fearing the pandemic. For that decision he was awarded by FIDE with a wild card. A debatable decision, but here we are.

What happened to Radjabov was a very disappointing transformation. The child prodigy who played wild and exciting chess full of King's Indians and Sveshnikovs, the 15-year-old who beat Kasparov with Black in Linares 2004, it seemed the only way was up. And it was, until 2013.

That fateful year Radjabov played his first Candidates Tournament. Entering as one of the favourites, with a rating of almost 2800, he crashed and burned badly. With a finish in last place on a disastrous -6 and with a whopping 32 points of rating lost, this event scarred Radjabov for life. The adventurous player started transforming into a drawing machine. The KIDs and

PALACIO DE SANTOÑA
Source: palaciosantona.es



Sveshnikovs gave way to the QGD and the Berlin. Radjabov shut down.

He slowly disappeared from the radar too. He became insignificant when it came to elite chess.

And then, in 2019, he burst back into the scene by winning the World Cup and qualifying for the Candidates in 2020. In that tournament, somehow his innate dynamism blended perfectly with his new-found solidity. That combination made Radjabov impossible to beat. However…

In that World Cup the second game he won in the final against Ding Liren, played on 2nd of October 2019, is his last (!!) win in classical chess up to date. His last event (in all time controls) was the European Team Championship in November 2021 where he drew all his games.

The propensity to play for a draw with both colours has become a trademark of his play. In an extremely tough tournament like the Candidates striving for solidity is even expected, thus in a way justifying his approach. It is easier for Radjabov to repeat Giri's record of 14 draws from the Moscow Candidates in 2016 than to win.

The best-case scenario for Radjabov is a repeat of the perfect blend of solidity and dynamism that happened to him in 2019. Like Rapport, he is scheduled to play on the eve of the Candidates in Norway. After months with a lack of serious practice, this outing before the Candidates should do him good. But whether he manages to calibrate the right balance that helped him in Khanty-Mansiysk three years ago remains to be seen.

The clock is ticking down. Soon enough Madrid will be a happy place for one player.

FIDE Candidates 2022 schedule

Day	14-15 June	ARRIVALS
1	16 June	Technical meeting and Opening Ceremony
2	17 June	Round 1
3	18 June	Round 2
4	19 June	Round 3
5	20 June	Free day
6	21 June	Round 4
7	22 June	Round 5
8	23 June	Round 6
9	24 June	Free day
10	25 June	Round 7
11	26 June	Round 8
12	27 June	Round 9
13	28 June	Free day
14	29 June	Round 10
15	30 June	Round 11
16	1	Round 12
17	2	Free day
18	3	Round 13
19	4	Round 14
20	5	Tie-breaks and Closing Ceremony
21	6	Departures

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TOURNAMENT REPORT:

CHESSABLE ENGLISH SENIORS

By IM Shaun Taulbut

The English Seniors sponsored by Chessable was held in Kenilworth from the 4th May until the 8 May 2022.

In the over 50s group, Mark Hebden won with 6.5/7 with Keith Arkell in second with 6/7. These two were way ahead of the field. In the over 65s there was a three-way tie between Cliff Chandler, Ian Snape and Paul Littlewood on 5.5 /7, with Chandler taking the title on tie break after fierce competition. Chris Shepherd and Oliver Jackson scored 5/7.

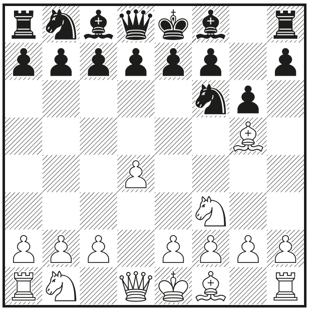
Here are some of the most interesting games from the event.

We start with a smooth win by Mark Hebden in the over 50s.

Jonathan **Nelson** – Mark **Hebden**

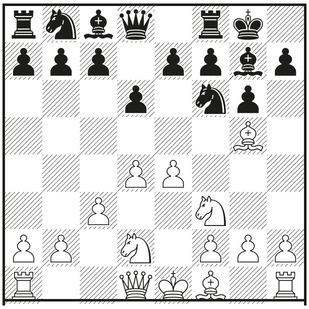
Chessable ENG Seniors 50+ Kenilworth ENG (6.1)

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 g6 3.♗g5



White plays an offbeat line which has merit but Black is prepared.

3...♗g7 4.♘bd2 0-0 5.c3 d6 6.e4



Now Black has to decide how to play in the centre, he opts for ...c5 rather than playing for ...e5.

6...c5 7.dxc5 dxc5 8.♗c4 ♘c6 9.♕e2 ♕c7 10.0-0 ♘a5 11.♗d3 h6

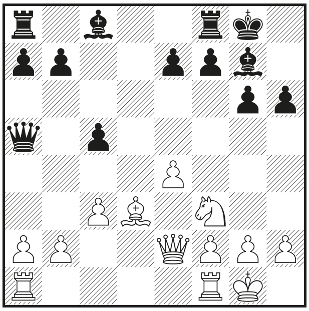
An accurate move. Taking advantage of the White setup to put the question to the bishop.

12.♗xf6 The alternatives were 12.♗h4 ♘h5 13.♗g3 ♘xg3 14.hxg3 with an edge for Black.

12.♗e3 ♘g4 and again Black will have the two bishops.

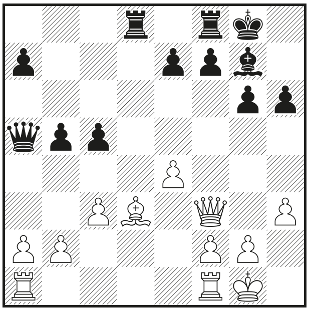
12...♗xf6 Black has the two bishops, a positional advantage.

13.♘c4 ♗g7 14.♘xa5 ♕xa5



There White now aims to stop Black developing his queenbishop on e6 but Black is able to play to g4.

15.♗c4 ♗g4 16.h3 ♗xf3 17.♕xf3 b5 18.♗d3 ♖ad8



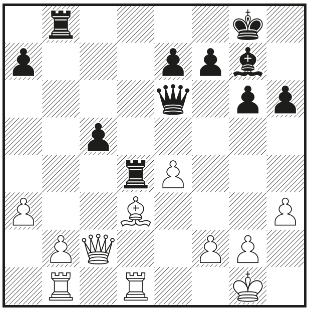
There are opposite bishops but Black has control of the dark squares and play on the queenside.

19.♖fd1 b4 The thematic breakthrough breaking up the White pawns.

20.cxb4 ♕xb4 21.♖ab1 ♕a4 22.a3 ♖d4 23.♕e2 ♖b8 24.♖dc1 After 24.♗c2 ♖xd1+ 25.♗xd1 ♕d4 26.b3 c4 retains the edge for Black.

24...♕d7 25.♖d1 After 25.♗c4 ♖d2 26.♕f3 e6 27.b3 ♗d4 28.♖f1 Black has an edge but no immediate win.

25...♕e6 26.♕c2



Now Black wins material.

26...c4 27.♗e2 ♕xe4 28.♕xe4 ♖xe4 29.♗f3 ♖d4 Black will also win the b-pawn in due course so White resigned.

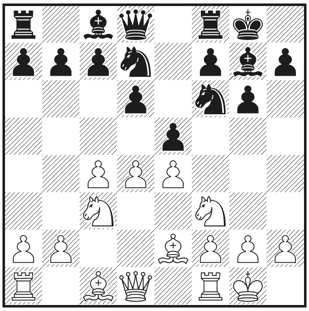
0-1

The over 65s was closely fought with Paul Littlewood the highest-rated player

Chris **Shephard** – Paul **Littlewood**

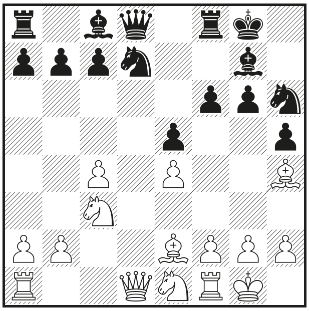
Chessable ENG Seniors 65+ Kenilworth ENG (5.1)

1.♘f3 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 ♗g7 4.e4 d6 5.d4 0-0 6.♗e2 ♘bd7 7.0-0 e5



8.♗e3 ♘g4 9.♗g5 f6 10.♗h4 h5 11.dxe5 11.h3 ♘h6 12.dxe5 dxe5 13.b4 is good for White.

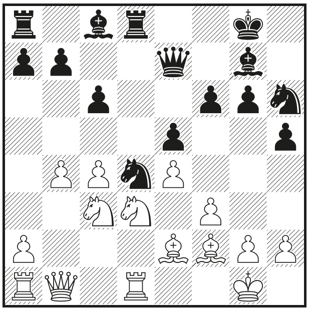
11...dxe5 12.♘e1 ♘h6



13.f3 c6 14.♗f2 ♕e7 15.♘d3 ♖d8 16.b4 Worth consideration was 16.♕a4 and if 16..♘f8 17.♗b6 is disruptive.

16...♘f8 Black aims for ...♘e6. A strong plan.

17.♕b1 ♘e6 18.♖d1 ♘d4



Now Black has a slight advantage with his strong knight on d4.

19.♗f1 ♗e6 20.♘c5 ♗f7 21.a3 a5 22.♘3a4 axb4 23.axb4 f5 24.exf5 gxf5 25.♖a2 e4 26.fxe4 b6 27.♘b3

If White plays 27.♘xb6 ♖xa2 28.♕xa2 ♘f3+ 29.gxf3 ♕g5+ 30.♔h1 ♖xd1 31.♕e2 ♕c1 32.♔g1 fxe4 with a decisive advantage for Black so White is forced to retreat and Black is able to sue the power of his bishops.

27...♘xb3 28.♖xd8+ ♕xd8 29.♕xb3 ♘g4 30.♕d3 30.♗xb6 ♗d4+ 31.♗xd4 ♕xd4+ 32.♔h1 ♘f2+ 33.♖xf2 ♕xf2 wins for Black.

30...♕xd3 31.♗xd3 b5 If the White knight goes to c3 32...♖d8 wins so White resigned.

0-1

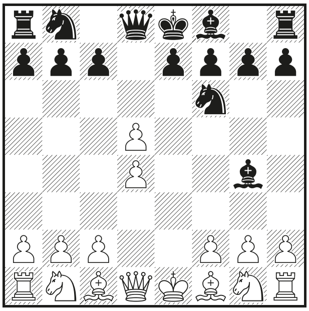
The next game was a key one in deciding the over 65s

Paul **Littlewood** – Cliff **Chandler**

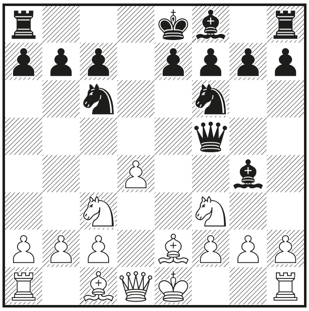
Chessable ENG Seniors 65+ Kenilworth ENG (6.1)

1.e4 d5 2.exd5 ♘f6 3.d4 ♗g4

A modern Scandinavian; now 4.f3 is critical.



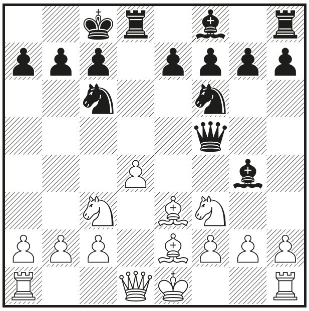
4.♘f3 ♕xd5 5.♗e2 ♘c6 6.♘c3 ♕f5



Black walks a tightrope but it is sound, the Queen can go to h5 or d7.

7.♗e3 If 7.♘h4 ♕h5 8.♗xg4 ♘xg4 9.♘f3 0-0-0 10.h3 ♘f6 and Black has pressure against d4.

7...0-0-0



8.0-0 If 8.♘h4 ♕h5 9.♗xg4+ ♘xg4 10.♘f3 e5 is strong for Black.

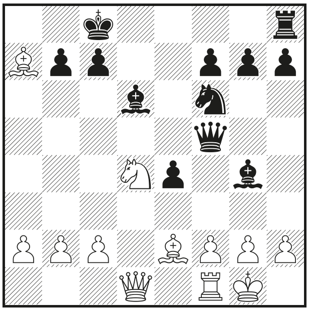
8...e5 9.d5 ♘b4 10.♗xa7 After 10.h3 ♗xf3 11.♗xf3 h5 prevents ♗g4 when if 12.♖c1 e4 is strong as d5 falls so White grabs a pawn but the bishop can be trapped.

10...♘bxd5 11.♘xd5 After the surprising 11.♘xe5 ♘xc3 12.♗xg4 ♘xg4 13.♕xg4 ♕xg4 14.♘xg4 ♘e2+ 15.♔h1 b6 16.♘e5 ♖e8 17.♘xf7 ♖g8 18.♖ad1 ♗c5 19.a3 ♔b7 20.♖d7 ♔xa7 21.♖xc7+ ♔b8 22.♖d7 ♘d4 23.b4 ♖e7 Black is better.

11...♖xd5 12.♕e1 ♗d6 12...♗xf3 13.♗xf3 e4 14.♗e2 b6 15.♗a6+ ♔d7 16.♗c4 ♖a5 17.♖d1+ ♗d6 is good for Black as the Bishop on a7 is lost.

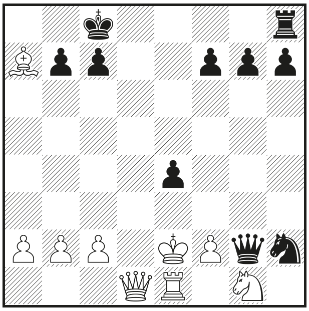
13.♖d1 ♖xd1 14.♕xd1 e4 14...♗xf3 15.♗xf3 e4 16.♗e2 b6 17.♗xb6 *(17.♗a6+ ♔d7 18.c4 ♔e7* The bishop on a7 is trapped *19.♗b7 ♕a5 20.♕e2 ♕xa7 21.♗xe4 ♔f8 22.a3 g6 23.♗c6 ♔g7)* 17...♕e5 18.g3 cxb6 with advantage to Black.

15.♘d4



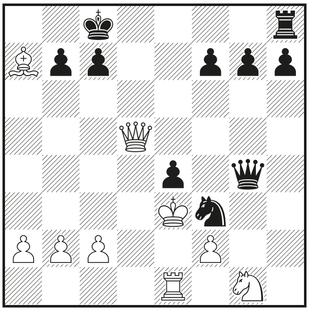
15...♗xh2+ 15...♕h5 is strong eg 16.♗xg4+ *(16.h3 ♗xe2 17.♕xe2 ♕xe2 18.♘xe2 b6* is winning*)* 16...♘xg4 17.h3 ♗h2+ 18.♔h1 ♘xf2+ wins.

16.♔xh2 ♕h5+ 17.♔g1 ♗xe2 18.♘xe2 ♘g4 19.♖e1 ♕h2+ 20.♔f1 ♕h1+ 21.♘g1 ♘h2+ 22.♔e2 ♕xg2



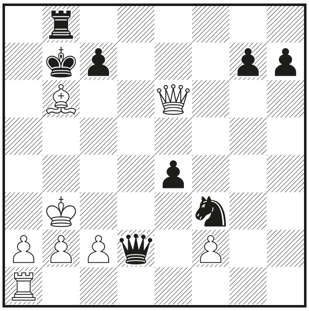
Black has a strong attack with the threat of ...♖d8.

23.♕d5 ♕g4+ 24.♔e3 ♘f3



25.♖a1 If 25.♘xf3 ♕xf3+ 26.♔d4 ♖d8 pins and wins the queen.

25...♘xg1 26.♕xf7 ♕e2+ 27.♔d4 ♘f3+ 28.♔c3 b6 29.♕e6+ ♔b7 30.♗xb6 ♕d2+ 31.♔b3 ♖b8



The clever rook move wins the game.

32.♔a3 If 32.♕xe4+ ♔xb6 33.♕xf3 ♔c5+ and mates on b4 follow.

32...♕xc2 33.♗a5 ♕d3+ 34.b3 If White exchanges queens 34.♕b3+ ♕xb3+ 35.axb3 h5 36.♖d1 h4 37.♖d7 h3 38.♖xc7+ ♔a6 39.b4 h2 40.♖c1 ♘g1 41.♗c7 h1♕ 42.♗xb8 ♕f3+ 43.♖c3 ♕xf2 44.♗g3 ♕d4 wins.

34...♖a8 35.♔a4 ♘d4 Also 35...♕d4+ 36.♕c4 ♕xc4+ 37.bxc4 ♔c6 38.♖h1 ♘e5 39.♖xh7 ♘xc4 40.♔b4 ♘xa5 41.♖xg7 ♔b6 42.♖g4 ♘c6+ 43.♔c3 ♖xa2 44.♖xe4 ♖xf2 wins.

36.♕c4 ♘c6 Winning the bishop on a5.

0-1

The placings in the Over 65s were as follows:

Chessable ENG Seniors 65+ Kenilworth ENG Wed 4th May 2022 - Sun 8th May 2022
Leading Final Round 7 Standings:

Rk	SNo	NAME	Ti	FED	Rtg	Pts	TB1	TB2	TB3
1	2	Chandler Cliff R		ENG	2292	5.5	0.0	22.5	28.0
2	5	Snape Ian L		ENG	2186	5.5	0.0	21.5	27.0
3	1	Littlewood Paul E	IM	ENG	2347	5.5	0.0	20.5	26.0
4	4	Shephard Chris C W		ENG	2203	5.0	0.0	21.0	26.5
5	3	Jackson Oliver A	FM	ENG	2206	5.0	0.0	18.5	24.0
6	11	De Coverly Roger D		ENG	1997	4.5	0.0	21.5	27.0
7	12	Hutchinson Norman A		ENG	1979	4.5	0.0	17.5	23.0
8	6	Bowmer Kevin		ENG	2100	4.5	0.0	21.0	26.5
9	15	Spanton Tim R		ENG	1972	4.5	0.0	20.0	25.5

The placings in the Over 50s were as follows:

Chessable ENG Seniors 50+ Kenilworth ENG Wed 4th May 2022 - Sun 8th May 2022
Leading Final Round 7 Standings:

Rk	SNo	NAME	Ti	FED	Rtg	Pts	TB1	TB2	TB3
1	1	Hebden Mark L	GM	ENG	2533	6.5	0.0	20.5	26.5
2	2	Arkell Keith C	GM	ENG	2437	6.0	0.0	19.5	26.0
3	10	Mason Donald J		ENG	2157	4.5	0.0	21.0	27.5
4	5	Josse Mark	CM	ENG	2235		0.0	20.0	26.5
5	6	Nelson Jonathan P		ENG	2227		0.0	16.5	23.0
6	8	Crocker Philip J		ENG	2202	4.0	0.0	18.5	25.0
7	3	Ledger Andrew J	IM	ENG	2398		0.0	18.0	22.5
8	14	Churavin Andrey		ENG	2094		0.0	17.0	23.0
9	11	Henderson David		ENG	2128	3.5	0.0	19.5	26.0
10	9	Thompson Ian D	FM	ENG	2201		0.0	19.0	25.0
11	18	Regan Natasha K	WIM	ENG	1972		0.0	18.5	25.0
12	4	Dishman Stephen	FM	ENG	2301		0.0	14.0	18.0
13	7	Dilley Jason M		ENG	2224	3.0	0.0	18.0	22.5
14	13	Baer Bruce L		ENG	2097		0.0	17.5	22.0
15	16	Wilson Edgar		ENG	1989		0.0	17.0	21.5
16	12	Lazarus Simon E		ENG	2112		0.0	13.5	19.5
17	15	Erdogan Hassan		ENG	2011		0.0	13.0	17.5
18	17	Gibbs Dominic V		ENG	1987	2.5	0.0	17.5	22.0
19	19	Portman Carl S		ENG	1960	2.5	0.0	15.5	19.5
20	20	Hickman John E		ENG	1846	2.5	0.0	13.0	16.5
21	21	Homer Neil S		ENG	1682	1.0	0.0	14.5	18.0
22	22	Mitchell Rob		ENG	0	0.0	0.0	12.5	16.5

THE LIFE OF FRANK J. MARSHALL FROM THE PEN OF HIS CONTEMPORARY AND RIVAL AT THE CHESSBOARD

AN ARTIST IN CHESS

By Jacques Mieses

The following obituary of Frank J. Marshall appeared, unattributed, in the January, 1945, issue of British Chess Magazine. BCM later corrected the omission.

The chess world has suffered a heavy loss in each of the last four years. In 1941 we lost Dr. Lasker, in 1942 Capablanca, in 1943 Spielmann and now comes the sad news from New York that Frank Marshall, for many years the leading player in the U.S.A., has died very suddenly from a heart attack.

Frank J. Marshall was born in New York on August 10th, 1877. Part of his childhood and youth was spent with his parents in Montreal, but he returned to New York in 1896. Since then, this has been his permanent home, although he frequently made lengthy stays in Europe, for Marshall was an extremely enterprising chess master, always eager for travel. During almost four decades he has been a well–known, frequent, and welcome guest in the chess circles of all the more important towns of the Continent and Great Britain.

One of the early photos of the Marshall family: Frank, Carrie and their son Frank Junior.

"Marshall's Chess Club," which he founded in New York in 1910 [it was in 1915 - *Ed.*], holds, with the Manhattan Club, the leading position in American chess.

In 1905 he married in New York; a very happy marriage, and his son Frank, junior, is now in Europe with the American Army.

The last two decades of the previous century added much to the development of the Art of Chess. In nearly all chess–loving countries a new generation of highly– talented players arose, most of whom showed the lion's claw at their first appearance. In England there was Burn and, later on, Atkins; in Germany, Tarrasch, Lasker, von Bardeleben, Mieses and Teichmann; in Austria, Schlechter and Marco; in Hungary, Maroczy and Charousek; in Russia, Tchigorin, Schiffers and Alapin; in France, Janowski; in the United States, Pillsbury and Showalter; and at the very end, as it were as a valuable parting gift of the passing century, a new and brilliant star arose in the chess firmament – Frank Marshall - who in 1899 made his first appearance in international chess.

Concurrently with the great International London Tournament, 1899, there was also a strong mixed Master Tournament in which, among notable players, Marco or myself were expected to win the first prize. Marshall, who played as representative of the Brooklyn Chess Club, was practically unknown. He certainly started as a "dark horse." The greater was the general astonishment when he carried away the first prize with a clear lead, and, as had to be conceded, it was a well–deserved success. He had played a number of really fine games. A well–known chess editor asked my opinion of Marshall at the time and I replied, "I should not be surprised if he turns out to be a second Pillsbury," but I added cautiously, "in intellectual matters it is the second success that counts, not the first."

Well, this second success was not long in coming. A year later a tournament was promoted in Paris, in which among first–class masters there were Lasker, Pillsbury, Maroczy, Tchigorin, Burn, Janowski, Schlechter, Showalter, Mieses and also Marshall. Lasker won the first prize with 14½, Pillsbury second with 12½. The third prize was shared between Maroczy and Marshall with 12 points. After this excellent performance, Marshall's reputation as a Grandmaster was beyond all doubt. The impression which his success made on the chess world was enhanced by the fact that he won his individual games both against Pillsbury and against Lasker, the champion's only loss in this tournament.

After this auspicious start Marshall scored many brilliant successes in tournament play. Of these his victory in Cambridge Springs, 1904 - ahead of Lasker and Janowski - in Nuremberg - ahead of Duras and Tarrasch - can only be described as sensational. In both these extremely hard tournaments he won through without the loss of a single game. In Barmen, 1905, he was third; in San Sebastian, 1911, fourth; in Pistyan, 1912, third. In New York, 1924, he won the fourth prize after Lasker, Capablanca and Alekhine; in Marienbad, 1925, he shared third and fourth prize after Nimzowitsch and Rubinstein. He took part in the International Team Tournaments in Warsaw, 1935, and Stockholm, 1937, with the victorious American team, and in both cases he achieved an excellent score.

Marshall was less successful in his matches with masters of the very front rank. He was decisively beaten by Tarrasch, Capablanca and Lasker. He played several short matches against Janowski with varying results. A match which he played against myself in 1908 resulted in his victory by 5 to 4 and one draw after a very lively contest. He won the Championship of the United States through his win against Showalter in 1908 [it was in 1909 - *Ed.*]. He held this Championship until 1937 [actually it was 1936 - *Ed.*], when he relinquished the title voluntarily.

It must be admitted that in tournaments also Marshall's record was not unbroken. Many times a dazzling victory was followed by a disappointing failure. No wonder he was thought by the experts to be erratic. A weakness in match temperament he shared with other, at times very successful, players, of whom I will only name Spielmann and also myself.

Young Frank Marshall

This might well appear to justify the query, how temperamental factors can influence a purely intellectual pursuit such as chess. A few remarks of a psychological nature may, therefore be in order.

Intellectually, chess rises far above the level of a mere game. In some respects it could almost be said to be on a par with science. At least in so far as theoretical research in chess can establish dogmas and general principles; but it approaches still more closely to Art because imagination and intuition are essential for the highest achievements. The artist imbues his work with his own personality. The style of every great author has its own personal touch. In the same way the connoisseur will recognize in the games of the great chess masters clearly and unmistakably their own

Jacques MIESES

1865-1954

Born in Lepizig, Germany as Jacob, Mieses was one of 27 original recipients of the grandmaster title awarded by FIDE in 1950 Because of his Jewish origin, he had to leave Germany in 1938 following the Night of Broken Glass and settled in England, where he lived until his death in 1954.

individual stamp. This is a criterion in common with scientific or artistic pursuits. Chess is a fight; the aim is to beat your opponent and this process - particularly in public contests - must be controlled under strict regulations. The scientist, the artist, creates when and as long as he feels the urge to do so. The Chess Master, be it in a tournament or a match, must carry on regardless of his inclination at stated times. He must undertake many hours of hard mental work and play a prescribed number of moves in that time. The same unbending rules apply to the young or the old. A player whose form varies more readily than his opponent's, or who tires more quickly - who therefore has less stamina - is temperamentally the weaker of the two, even if artistically his equal.

Other characteristics, such as consuming ambition, unwavering self–confidence, even after an unexpected failure, must be named as advantages which frequently are of decisive influence. So far the Chess Championship of the World has been held only by such master minds in whom the genius for chess and the chess temperament were equally outstanding. As is well–known, this was shown already by the match Steinitz - Zukertort.

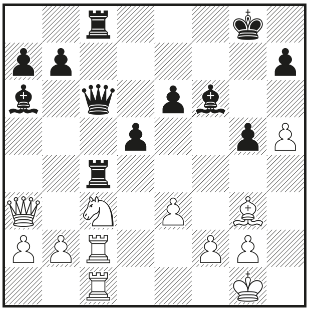
Obviously Marshall's transcending talent in chess as a pure art was ahead of his competitive tenacity, which explains his occasional lack of success. A peculiarity of his character may have contributed to this which I would like to mention here. He had a leaning to a slightly superstitious type of fatalism. I remember that at one time he lost against me in three successive tournaments. He said, quite seriously, that he would rather play a match against Lasker or Pillsbury than against me because "against me he could not play". This temporary sense of inferiority did not last long, however, as I learned to my cost, for in the very next tournament - at Cambridge Springs - he beat me.

As an artist in chess Marshall had a most interesting personality. He played the opening, the middle game and the endgame with equal virtuosity and in a distinctly individual manner. As he mentions in his book, which appeared recently, My 50 years of Chess, he felt most at home in an open game; yet he mostly opened with 1.d4. His real object, however, in doing so was in accordance with his typical handling of the opening; he wished to revert to an open game by following up with e4, as soon as ever possible.

The following ending from a team match, England vs America, shows how dangerous and ingenious Marshall could be as an attacking player.

Frank **Marshall** - Henry **Atkins**

USA – England, Cable match 1903



25.b3 Initiating a charming combination.

25...♖c5 If 25...♖xc3, then 26.♖xc3 ♗xc3 27.♗e5 with a slight advantage in position for White.

26.♘xd5 That is the point! A very pretty sacrifice of the exchange.

26...♖xc2 27.♖xc2 ♕xc2 28.♘xf6+ ♔f7 If 28...♔h8, then 29.♕e7, threatening both e3–e4 and ♗g3–e5.

29.♕d6 ♔xf6 In reply to 29...♕c6, White would have the powerful move 30.♘e4.

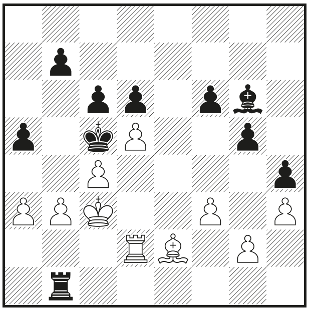
30.♗e5+ ♔f5 If 30...♔f7, then 31.♕d7+ and mate in a few moves.

31.f3 Black resigned in the hopeless position.

As an example of Marshall's masterly conduct of the endgame, we give here part of the ending in his game against Teichmann in San Sebastian, 1911. Marshall prefaces his notes to this game with the following remarks - "As I have always been looked upon as a player who seeks the decision in the middle game, I welcome the opportunity to acquaint the reader with some examples of my endgame play. Here is a game of which I am particularly fond -

Richard **Teichmann** - Frank **Marshall**

San Sebastian 1911



58...b5 Threatening mate.

59.b4+ axb4 60.axb4+ ♖xb4 61.dxc6 bxc4

Frank Marshall with his wife Carrie

62.♖d5+ ♔xc6 Black is right in refraining from winning a pawn by 62...♔xd5 63.♔xb4 ♔xc6 64.♔xc4 d5+ 65.♔d4 ♔d6, since the position appears to be a draw.

63.♖xd6+ ♔xd6 64.♔xb4 ♔e5 65.♔xc4 ♗f7+ 66.♔d3 ♔f4 67.♗f1 ♔g3 *That is the position Marshall played for.*

68.♔e3 ♗d5 69.♔e2 f5 70.♔e3 ♗e6 71.♔e2 g4 72.hxg4 After 72.fxg4 Black would win with 72...fxg4 73.♔e3 ♗d7 74.♔e2 ♗b5+! 75.♔e1 ♗c6 76.hxg4 ♗xg2 77.♗xg2 ♔xg2 78.g5 h3 and Black queens with a check.

72...fxg4 73.♔e3 ♗d7 74.fxg4 ♗xg4 75.♔e4 ♗c8 76.♔e3 ♗d7 White resigns, because there is no parry against Black's threatened ...♗c6.

Marshall was universally liked because of his unassuming and friendly manner. He had the easy and cheery disposition of one of nature's children. One should read the autobiography in his *My Fifty Years of Chess* which I mentioned above. Here Marshall appears as truly to himself. Reading this book those who knew him can hear him speak.

In Marshall, one of the three last representatives has gone of that important period of chess history in which they still crossed swords with Steinitz, Blackburne, Mason, Pillsbury, Tchigorin. Maroczy, of whom nothing has been heard since the beginning of the war, is now, apart from myself, the only survivor. I feel a slight shivering. A feeling of loneliness creeps upon me.

TRIBUTES FROM GREAT PLAYERS, RIVALS AND FRIENDS

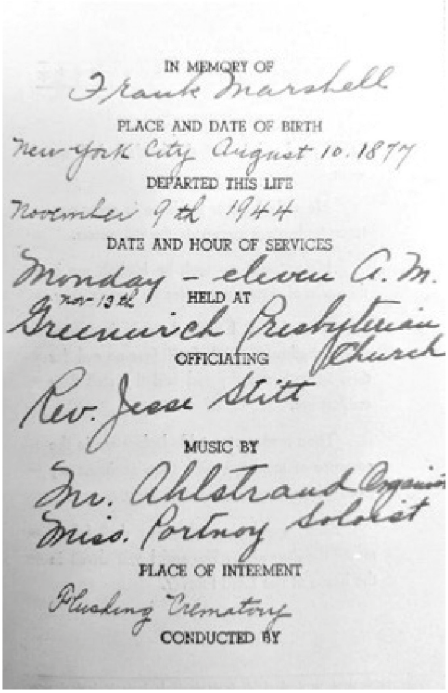
From C.J.S. Purdy's *Check!* magazine of April 1945

TRIBUTES FROM RUSSIA

(by radiogram to "Chess Review")

BOTVINNIK: I deeply mourn the death of the great American chess– master, Frank J. Marshall, a player of the class of Dr. Emanuel Lasker and Jose R. Capablanca. Soviet masters, myself among them, have always been greatly impressed by his ingenuity, daring, and originality. We have always studied his art and learned a great deal from his games. We were touched by the warmth of feeling with which he recalled his visit to Moscow in his remarkable book. The memory of Marshall as a subtle chess artist and fine sportsman is alive among us.

Memorial service card



IN MEMORY OF
Frank Marshall
PLACE AND DATE OF BIRTH
New York City August 10. 1877
DEPARTED THIS LIFE
November 9th 1944
DATE AND HOUR OF SERVICES
Monday – eleven A. M.
Nov-13th
HELD AT
Greenwich Presbyterian Church
OFFICIATING
Rev. Jesse Stitt
MUSIC BY
Mr. Ahlstrand Organi
Miss. Portnoy Soloist
PLACE OF INTERMENT
Flushing Crematory
CONDUCTED BY

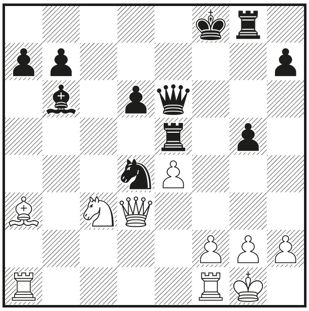
VERLINSKY: The American champion was a general favourite at the international tournament of 1925. He beat me in grand style in the first round. I don't remember ever feeling such admiration for any of my opponents as I had for Marshall. I am sorry I never had occasion to meet him again. I would gladly have lost again for the satisfaction of such a meeting.

B20

Frank **Marshall** - Boris **Verlinsky**

Moscow, 1925

1.e4 c5 2.b4 cxb4 3.a3 e5 4.axb4 ♗xb4 5.c3 ♗c5 6.♘f3 ♘c6 7.♗c4 d6 8.d4 exd4 9.cxd4 ♗b6 10.0–0 ♗g4 11.♕b3 ♗xf3 12.♗xf7+ ♔f8 13.♗xg8 ♖xg8 14.♕xf3+ ♕f6 15.♕h5 ♘xd4 16.♗a3 ♖e8 17.♘c3 ♖e5 18.♕h3 ♕e6 19.♕d3 g5



20.♖ab1! ♗c5 21.♗xc5 dxc5 22.f4 gxf4 23.♖xf4+ ♔g7 24.♖xb7+ ♔h8 25.♖ff7 ♖h5 26.e5 ♘f5 27.♕e4 a5 28.♘d5 ♖d8 29.♖f6 ♕c8

Black resigned

THE
FRANK J. MARSHALL
CHESS TROPHY

The great chess mystery:
the case of the missing trophy -
last seen with Bobby Fischer!

GREKOV: I was attracted by nature to Marshall's art, which was akin to that of the great Russian master, Mikhail Tchigorin. I recall that Tchigorin always spoke warmly of Marshall. Marshall left upon us all a lasting impression, not only as a player but as a man.

“

I FEEL
A SLIGHT
SHIVERING.

A FEELING
OF LONELINESS
CREEPS UPON ME

NAPIER'S TRIBUTE

[William Ewart Napier, one of America's most gifted masters, was Marshall's friend for fifty years. Besides, anything Napier writes is worth quoting. Many chess masters have written more, but none as well. This tribute from him appeared in *Chess Review*.]

Friendships die hard after a mellowing stretch of fifty years, especially so, perhaps, when the mutual esteem has sprung from a brief ancient rivalry. It is my hazy recollection that Marshall - always “Jimmy” to me - and I joined the old Brooklyn Chess Club within a week of each other, at about the time Pillsbury first went abroad to the Hastings tournament, from the same club. It was a good school for youngsters.

Marshall's elemental genius quickly found expression in tournament play, to which his long, brilliant record bears witness... Sometimes he failed; but to him failure was never final. Always he ploughed on to new achievement because in phenomenal measure he had the gift and gumption and guts that go into chess mastery.

The temptation is considerable, when a great figure in chess passes on, to clothe his memory with the mantle of some earlier prodigy. Here the custom lack fitness, for Marshall resembled no one but himself - unless, indeed, we look all the way back to Labourdonnais. Marshall was not a disciple. It seems to me that an epoch began with this man - an epoch of revolt against the orthodoxy, the Victorian smoothness of play which was still the prevailing style in the nineties. Marshall was averse to formal openings learned from books: he revelled in “rolling his own.” Certain it is that the character of opening play has changed radically within the past fifty years; and it may well be that Marshall touched off all the picturesque insurgency happily let loose in recent decades by Reti, Nimzowitch, and other celebrities. Marshall has a mantle all his own.

THE ...g6 GALAXY

By Grandmaster Raymond Keene OBE

One of the reasons which attracted me to defensive systems based on 1…g6 was their potential for annihilating the opposition right in the opening stages. It was possible for White to feel he was making all the running, only to be suddenly obliterated, as in the following miniature against Ponelis from the 1976 South African Open in Cape Town.

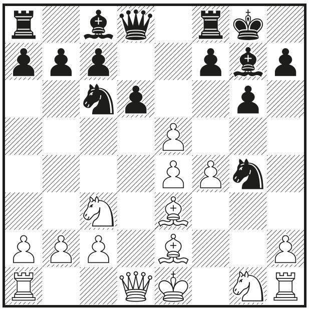
Albert A **Ponelis** - Raymond **Keene**

South African Open Cape Town, 07.1976

1.e4 g6 2.d4 ♗g7 3.♘c3 d6 4.f4 ♘c6 5.♗e3 ♘f6 Now 6. h3 followed by g4 has been played by Fischer and used twice against me. There will be a further column on this.

6.♗e2 0-0 But White's next doesn't fit at all with his sixth.

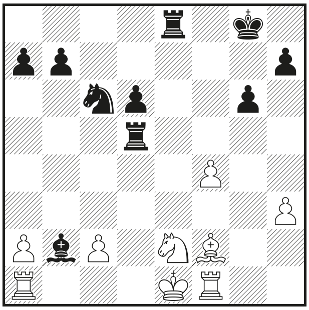
7.g4?! e5! 8.dxe5 ♘xg4



The counterblow which White had overlooked.

9.♗xg4 ♕h4+ 10.♗f2 ♕xg4 11.♕xg4 ♗xg4 Even without queens the bishop pair proves lethal.

12.h3 ♗h5 13.exd6 cxd6 14.♘ge2 f5 15.exf5 ♖ae8 16.♔d2 ♖xf5 17.♖hf1 ♗xe2 18.♘xe2 ♖d5+ 19.♔e1 ♗xb2



Black's last move threatened a rook and checkmate.

0-1

……

One online commentator ('An Englishman') helpfully identified a forensic point, '... 7.♘f3 is staid and sound, 7. e5 is risky for both sides, 7. h3 is relatively unexplored, but 7. g4?! was just a bit too much for White to try. The move 14...f5 is a stiletto of a move; it probably took White a bit of time to realize that he had been 'stabbed', and how much trouble he was in.'

My all-time favourite quick victory with Black came in this game against John Nunn, where my only serious decision was whether to finish off with …♕b6, ♕f6 or ♕b4 as chosen. I may even have chosen the least accurate move, but one cannot argue too much against a move which causes resignation.

John **Nunn** - Raymond **Keene**

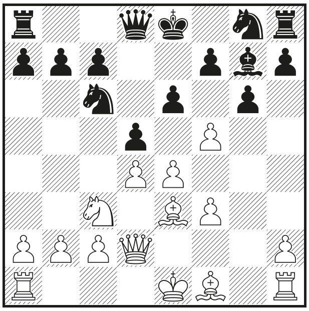
Hammersmith, 1971,
Modern Defence: Pseudo-Austrian Attack (B06)

1.e4 g6 2.d4 ♗g7 3.♘c3 d6 4.f4 ♘c6 I have always been tempted by this move, which puts immediate pressure on White's broad pawn centre. The best reply is 5.♗e3 but in the early days of this variation White players frequently allowed the coming pin.

5.♘f3 ♗g4 6.♗e3 ♗xf3 7.gxf3 In order to avoid losing a pawn White must allow his pawns to be shattered. Black's best now is the immediate 7...d5, as I later played against Ludgate and the German Grandmaster Unzicker: 1.e4 g6 2. d4 d6 3.♘c3 ♗g7 4.f4 ♘c6 5.♘f3 ♗g4 6.♗e3 ♗xf3 7.gxf3 d5 Now 8.♘e2 (Ludgate vs Keene, British Ch. 1971) is passive. The German Grandmaster keeps things fluid by permitting his pawn structure to become compromised. 8.exd5 ♘b4 9.♗b5+ ♔f8 10.a3 ♘xd5 11.♘xd5 ♕xd5 12.♕e2 ♘h6 13.c3 ♘f5 14.♗c4 ♕d6 15.♗d2 ♗f6 16.O-O-O ♔g7 17.♗d3 e6 18.♔b1 ♖he8 19.♖he1 ♕d7 (Unzicker vs Keene, Hastings 1971/2). After 8.♘xd5 e6 or 8.exd5 ♘b4 9.♗b5+ ♔f8 followed by ...♘xd5 Black has a fine position, but, as defended by Unzicker, it is impossible for Black to take advantage of White's damaged pawn structure.

7...e6!?

8.♕d2 d5 9.f5!

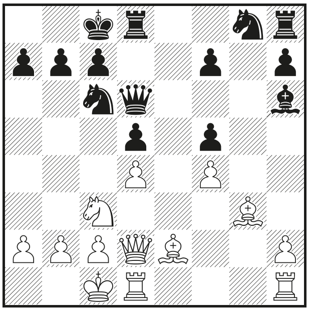


This demonstrates that the immediate 7... d5 is probably better than the preliminary 7...e6. True to his energetic style the teenage prodigy, who later went on to become one of Britain's strongest players, and a renowned expert on sharp openings, seeks to eradicate his strategic inferiority by blasting the position open.

9...exf5 10.exf5? 10.♘xd5! is far better, leaving the issue still in doubt.

10...♕h4+ The idea of playing ...♕h4 to disrupt the opponent's development, or take a sideways swipe at the pawn centre, crops up frequently in my games. A parallel is the game Keene vs Eales, Cambridge 1968 which started 1.d4 f5 2.♘c3 d5 3.e4 e6? 4.exf5 exf5 5.♕h5+ g6 6.♕e2+ ♗e7 7.♗g5 with a huge advantage.

11.♗f2 ♕e7+ 12.♗e2 ♗h6 13.f4 0-0-0 14.0-0-0 ♕d6 15.♗g3 gxf5

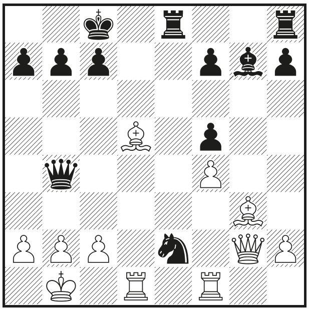


Black has a grip and an extra pawn.

16.♖hf1 ♘ge7 It might look more impressive to play ...♘f6 but then 17.♗h4 causes slight problems

17.♗f3 ♗g7 18.♕f2 ♖de8 19.♕g2? White loses patience and allows Black's king's bishop to enter the game with devastating effect.

19...♘xd4 20.♘xd5 ♘xd5 21.♗xd5 ♘e2+ 22.♔b1 ♕b4



White now resigned on account of the amusing mate 23.♗b3 ♘c3+ 24.bxc3 ♕xc3 25. ♔c1 ♕b2+ 26.♔d2 ♖e7 27.♗h4 ♖d8+ 28.♗d5 ♕c3+ 29.♔c1 ♕a3+ 30.♔d2 ♕e3 mate.

The engine gives Black an overwhelming advantage after both 22...♕f6 and ...♕b4 but likes most of all ...♕b6 by a significant measure (Analysis by Stockfish 14+, depth 40/99 ply).

A) 22...♕b6 23.♗b3 ♕f6 24.c3 ♘xc3+ 25.♔a1 ♖e2 26.♗h4 ♖xg2 27.♗xf6 ♘xd1 28.♗xg7 ♘e3 29.♗xh8 ♘xf1 30.♗xf7 (-8.8)

B) 22...♕f6 23.c3 ♘xc3+ 24.bxc3 ♕xc3 25.♗e1 ♕a1+ 26.♔c2 ♕b2+ 27.Kd3 ♕b5+ 28.♔d2 ♖hg8 29.♖f2 ♗d4 30.♕f3 (-7.8)

C) 22...♕b4 23.♗b3 ♘c3+ 24.♔a1 ♘xd1 25.♖xd1 ♖d8 26.♖b1 ♕e4 27.♕h3 h5 28.♗h4 ♖d2 29.a3 ♕xf4 30.♗g3 (-5.5)

Or 27.♕f2 ♔b8 28.c3 ♗f6 29.a3 ♕c6 30.♕c2 ♖he8 31.♖c1 ♕d7 32.♖d1 (-5.8)

It's not often that one can opt for the third strongest move in a position and have one's opponent resign on the spot!

0-1

Next month: my various excursions after Fischer's dangerous 6. h3.

QUOTES and QUERIES

Lightning chess and postal matches

By Alan Smith

6218 Four miniatures this month. The first features a novelty on move four in the From Counter Gambit. This line can look inviting for black, but do not forget that white has the option of transposing into a King's Gambit at move two!

The 1890's was a time of change and innovation for chess in the USA. After the death of Captain Mackenzie there was uncertainty as to who was American champion. Lipschutz, Hodges and Showalter battled for the laurels, but all were soon overtaken by Pillsbury.

Hermann Helms' era spanning column in the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* started on 25th October 1893, the following year saw six New York clubs participate in the first Metropolitan League.

The decade also saw two less heralded events.

Lightning chess tournaments are not a modern innovation. Hooper and Whyld give 1897 as the date of the first such event, in fact there were events before that. The first such was organised by the Brooklyn Chess Club in December 1893, an eight player knock out where the players had half a minute for each move. This may seem a bit slow for lightning, but it is still a rate of 120 moves per hour. Club president Charles Gilberg acted as timekeeper for the event.

Here is the only surviving game, played by the winner in the semi final. Defending at such speeds is no easy task.

William **de Visser** - Arthur **Souweine**

Brooklyn CC 1893

1.e4 e5 2.♘c3 ♘c6 3.f4 exf4 4.♘f3 g5 5.h4 g5 6.♘g5 h6 7.♘xf7 The Hamppe Allgaier Gamibt is a handful at any speed.

7...♔xf7 8.d4 d5 9.♗xf4 ♗b4 10.♗e2 h5 11.0–0 ♔g7 12.♘xd5 ♗d6 13.♗g5 ♗e7 14.♘xe7 ♘gxe7 15.♗f6+ ♔h7 16.♕d3 There is no rush to grab material.

16...♖g8 16...♘b4?? loses on the spot to 17.♕b5!

17.e5+ ♖g6 18.c3 ♕g8 19.♕e4 ♗e6 20.♗d3 ♗d5 21.♕f4 ♖f8 22.c4 22.♕g5 is even stronger.

22...♗xc4 23.♗xg6+ ♘xg6 23...♕xg6 is better.

24.♕g5 ♖xf6 25.♖xf6 ♗f7 26.♖af1 ♗e8 27.♕xh5+ ♔g7 28.♕xg4 ♔h6 29.♕g5+ ♔h7 30.h5 ♘ce7 31.♖1f3 ♕c4 32.hxg6+ ♘xg6 33.♖h3+ 33...♔g7 is refuted by 34.♖xg6+! ♗xg6 35.♕f6+ ♔g8 36.♖h8 #

1–0

Brooklyn Daily Standard Union,
26th December 1893

Willian de Visser was a talented amateur who won games from Lipschutz, Marshall, Mieses and Taubenhaus.

The Brooklyn CC ran another lightning event early in 1894. Sixteen players participated, here is a game by the winner, played in the semi final round.

Philip **Richardson** - William **de Visser**

Brooklyn CC 1894

1.e4 c5 2.♘c3 ♘c6 3.♘f3 e6 4.d4 cxd4 5.♘xd4 ♘f6 6.♘xc6 bxc6 7.♗d3 d5 8.e5 ♘d7 9.♗f4 ♗b4 10.♕g4 ♔f8 11.0–0 f6 12.♕h5 fxe5 13.♗xe5 ♘xe5 14.♕xe5 ♗d6 15.♕h5 ♕f6 16.♖ae1 g6 17.♕h6+ ♕g7 18.♕d2 e5 19.f4 ♗c5+ 20.♔h1 e4 This pretty much forces white's reply. **21.♗xe4!? dxe4 22.♘xe4** Two pawns may not seem like enough for a piece, but black still has problems completing his development.

22...♕d4 23.♕e2 ♗f5 24.♕f3 ♔g7 25.c3 ♗xe4 26.♖xe4 ♕d5 27.♖d1 ♕f5 28.♖e5 ♕f8 29.♖d7+ ♔g8 30.♕xc6 1–0 30...♕xf4 fails, 31.♕xd5+! ♔f8 32.♕xa8 #

Brookly Daily Standard Union,
5th February 1894

Postal matches between chess clubs were usually played by consulting teams. The earliest example of two clubs competing over several boards was between Cambridge and Oxford universities in the years before the first Varsity match.

The correspondence match between Savannah and Washington DC started in 1894 and ran on into 1895. The match was six a side and the players contested two games. The contest grew out of D.C.Usina's move from Savannah to Washington.

Major A.L. **Hartridge** - Frank **Baker Walker**

Correspondence 1894-1895

1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf3 3.♗c4 d5 4.♗xd5 ♕h4+ 5.♔f1 g5 6.♘c3 ♗g7 7.d4 ♘e7 8.♘f3 ♕h5 9.h4 h6 10.♔g1 g4 Dubious, Gunsberg reckoned 10...♕g6 11.♗c4 ♗g4 12.♘b5 ♘a6 13.♗d3 ♕b6 led to equality.

11.♘e1 c6 12.♗c4 ♘g6 13.♘e2 f3 14.♘g3 ♕a5 15.c3 ♕d8 16.♘h5 ♗f6 17.gxf3 gxf3 18.♘xf6+ ♕xf6 19.♕xf3 White has a big edge , extra pawn and bishop pair.

19...♕g7 20.♘g2 ♘f8 21.♗f4 ♗g4 22.♕g3 ♘bd7 23.♖f1 ♘e6 24.d5 ♘d8 There was a case for 24...♘xf4 25.♖xf4 ♘e5

25.♔h2 ♕g6 26.♖hg1 ♗h5 27.♘e3 ♕xg3+ 28.♖xg3 ♗g6 29.♘c4 ♘b6 30.♘d6+ ♔e7 31.♗e5 ♘xc4 32.♘xc4 ♖h7 33.♗f6+ ♔e8 34.h5 ♗xh5 35.♖g8+ ♔d7 36.♘e5+ ♔c7 37.d6+ ♔xd6 38.♖f2 ♖c8 39.♖d2+ ♔c5 40.♖dxd8 ♖c7 41.♘d7+ 1–0

Savannah Morning News,
7th January 1895

Major Hartridge also won the companion game, a Muzio Gambit.

J.M. **Palin** - D.A. **Usina**

Correspondence 1894

1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 3.♘f3 g5 4.h4 g4 5.♘e5 ♗g7 6.d4 ♘f6 7.♗c4 d5 8.exd5 0–0 9.♗xf4 ♘xd5 10.♗xd5 ♕xd5 11.0–0 ♘c6 11...c5 12.♘c3 ♕xd4+ 13.♕xd4 cxd4 14.♘d5 was played in Steinitz - Blackburne mg3 London 1876, white won a fluctuating struggle.

12.♘xc6 12.♘c3 is a forgotten novelty here, 12...♕xd4+ 13.♕xd4 ♘xd4 14.♖ad1 ♘xc2? 15.♘d5 c6 16.♘e7+ ♔h8 17.♘xf7+! ♖xf7 18.♖d8+ ♖f8 19.♖xf8+ ♗xf8 20.♗e5+ ♗g7 21.♖f8 # Cordel - Block Germany 1887.

12...bxc6 13.c3 13.♗e3 is stronger.

13...c5 14.♗e3 ♕e4 15.♖e1 ♗b7 16.♕d2 cxd4 17.♗xd4 ♕d5 18.♗xg7 ♔xg7 19.♕xd5 ♗xd5 20.♘d2 White's knight is more versatile than black's bishop.

20...♖ad8 20...♖fe8 21.c4.

21.♘f1 ♖d7 22.♖ad1 ♖fd8 23.a3 ♗e6 24.♖xd7 ♖xd7 25.♔f2 ♖d5 26.♘e3 ♖e5 26...♖d2+ 27.♖e2 ♖xe2+ 28.♔xe2 ♔f6 favours white.

27.g3 ♔f6 28.♖d1 c5 29.♖d6! The winning move.

29...♔e7 30.♖a6 c4 31.♖xa7+ ♔d6 32.♖a4 ♖c5 33.♖b4 ♔c6 34.♖b8 ♖b5 35.♖xb5 ♔xb5 36.♘c2 ♔a4 37.♘d4 ♗d7 38.♔e3 ♗c8 39.♔e4 f5+ 40.♘xf5 ♔b3 The winner pointed out that 40...♗xf5 41.♔xf5 ♔b3 42.♔e4 ♔xb2 43.♔d4 ♔xa3 44.♔xc4 was no better.

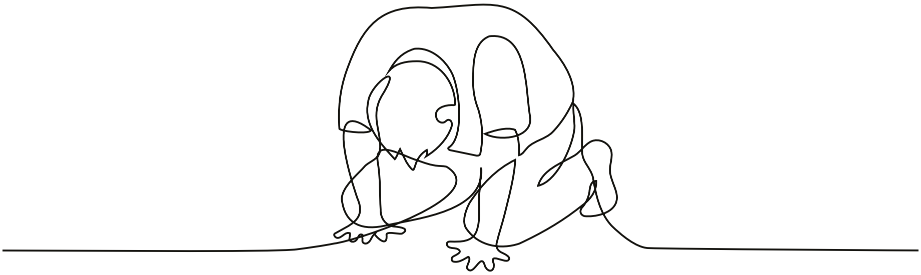
41.♘d6 ♗e6 42.♔d4 h5 43.a4

1-0

Savannah Morning News,
2nd December 1894

Palin and Usina split the points, but the Savannah player was unfortunate not to do better, as he blundered his queen when a piece ahead. During the contest Usina returned home and played ten games against the best Savannah players, winning 9-1.

EXPLORING SOVIET HISTORY THROUGH THE 64 SQUARE PRISM



THE HUMAN DRAMA IN THE SHADOWS OF THE CHESSBOARD

A REVIEW OF ‘MASTERPIECES AND DRAMAS OF THE SOVIET CHAMPIONSHIPS VOLUME II (1938 – 1947)’ BY SERGEY VORONKOV, PUBLISHED BY ELK AND RUBY, 2021

By Peter O’Brien

The opening lines of the first chapter could not be clearer. The chapter is called ‘Under the Wheel of Fate’. The citation directly below the title is from Bertolt Brecht’s ‘’The march of the calves’ and reads:

‘Following the drum
The calves trot
The skin for the drum
They deliver themselves’

Then the text continues: ‘The ‘Krylenko era’ of our chess ended somewhat quietly. No accusations, no public firing from the All Union Chess and Checkers section, no sensational revelations in a newspaper... Something bubbled at Lubyanka, and that’s all - there weren’t even any circles in the water’.

The book is devoted to politics, Soviet politics in a particularly dark decade. References to chess (it’s not till page 60 that even the score of a full game is given) serve as a context for the dissection of how things actually worked. Gone are the bursts of incredible enthusiasm described in Volume One of this masterpiece (see my review in BCM June 2021). Now we have entered the mechanistic epoch, where wheels grind to fulfil political purposes alone. Since chess has been chosen by the political master(s) as the vehicle which can demonstrate the purported superiority of the Soviet system, events and individuals appearing at the board must meet the criteria of ‘political correctness’ as determined at any given moment.

During the 10 years covered by Voronkov, there were five Soviet championships per se, plus the 1941 match tournament for the title of Soviet Absolute Champion. Of these six tournaments, three took place in Moscow and three in Leningrad - the geographical spread exhibited by the first 10 championships (covered in Volume One of Voronkov’s work) has given way to the focus on the two very Russian cities. The underlying threads are three-fold, and can be identified with the names of world-famous players. First, Botvinnik, as the Soviet designated heir to the title of world champion. Second, Keres - is the Estonian

The 12th USSR chess championship 1940: Botvinnik standing, Keres to the right

to be admitted to the fold or not? Third, the ‘new kids on the block’, especially Smyslov, Boleslavsky, Bondarevsky, Kotov and Bronstein.

With political power being thoroughly consolidated (ossified) during these years, those with chess ambitions could realise them (fully or partially) only within a framework set by bigger forces. Voronkov offers us an exceptionally detailed, and richly researched, examination of the framework itself and of how the individuals just mentioned, along with quite a few others, navigated (or failed to navigate) the choppy waters.

The first chapter serves to introduce most of the key themes and personalities that will dominate the period, as well as to discuss the 11th Soviet championship (1939) itself. At the outset, Voronkov describes the actions surrounding the demise (and execution) of Krylenko. It’s worth underlining that, at least in certain countries, some people seemed to be well informed about what was actually happening. For instance, Voronkov cites an article from the Belfast Herald in 1936 which demonstrates that the author(s) understood very well the politics driving the events in the Soviet chess world. A key point is that, for one year, Botvinnik was put into Krylenko’s position. Though it seems that Botvinnik did not sign any of the (highly questionable) decisions taken by the All Union Section during that time, there seems little doubt that his involvement was assumed by many players, and relations with them deteriorated. In essence, these events established a trend for the coming years. As the standing and prestige of Mikhail Moiseevich as a player rose, so his relations with other leading Soviet players became worse. Botvinnik in effect turned into the voice of the players, echoing however the wishes of the authorities.

The 11th Championship was consciously organised to offer conditions on a par with, or even superior to, those found in the very best of international tournaments. It attracted, as usual, large audiences which frequently included such musical personalities as David Oistrakh and

The 12th USSR chess championship 1940: Andor Lilienthal and Igor Bondarevsky

Sergey Prokofiev. The Championship was organised to fit Botvinnik's schedule. Originally, the event was set for 1938. In the latter part of that year, however, there was a major international tournament in Amsterdam to which Botvinnik was invited. The Soviet championship was therefore delayed until 1939 so that Botvinnik could compete. The semi-finals themselves contained exceptionally strong players, some of whom (Bogatyrchuk in particular) did not even wish to play but were subjected to arm twisting by the authorities. The final was convincingly won by Botvinnik, with an undefeated score of 12.5 from 17. Some of the outstanding participants of earlier championships, especially Levenfish and Romanovsky, did not do well. As yet there was little evidence of a new generation, except for Kotov, who finished second a point behind Botvinnik, and Sergey Belavenets, who alas died in the subsequent war. But background manoeuvres were arguably more important than the event itself. Botvinnik had already entered into negotiations to hold a world championship match. Those discussions were to be a permanent feature of the scene until Alekhine's death in 1946. Indeed, as quoted in the opening paragraph of Chapter 2, Botvinnik himself wrote that, although formal discussions were interrupted after September 1939, 'essentially, there was no interruption at all: the question of the impending match was still weaving through Soviet chess, like a bright red string'.

The 12th Championship, held in Moscow from early September to early October 1940, turned out to be of great consequence, from every point of view. It was won jointly by Bondarevsky and Lilienthal, followed by Smyslov, Keres (Estonia had just been absorbed by the Soviet Union) and Boleslavsky, with Botvinnik relegated to sixth place. Given that Keres had been regarded by many as the rightful challenger to Alekhine, Botvinnik's status as 'champion in waiting' was thrown into serious doubt. What's more, the performances of Bondarevsky, Smyslov and Boleslavsky indicated that among the young players there were several demonstrating genuine world title calibre. There seems to be no obvious reason why Botvinnik finished two points behind the winners, though the quality of play exhibited by them was outstanding (Lilienthal was undefeated and Bondarevsky won no fewer than 10 games, his only defeat being to Lilienthal). In terms of exciting and creative chess, the 12th championship was exceptionally productive. Voronkov devotes 35 pages to full games and key moments of games, a selection which seeks to do justice to the efforts of all the participants. There is everything, from Keres use of the King's Gambit to conjure one of those exquisitely elegant and violent attacks of which he was an incredible exponent, to Bondarevsky's feat in totally outplaying Botvinnik in the first round of the tournament, and culminating in Lilienthal's last round 'must win' game to catch Bondarevsky where the Hungarian origin maestro created what Voronkov describes as 'the golden endgame'.

A normal follow-up to that truly exceptional tournament would have been a match between the two winners, as had been the case a couple of years earlier when Levenfish and Botvinnik had tied in the championship itself. But this time the political imperatives once again dictated what would happen. Voronkov ironically entitles the following chapter 'The Restoration'. Why? Because, starting again with Botvinnik, actions are taken to prevent the two-player match and concoct instead a 6-player 'Match Tournament for the Title of Soviet Absolute Champion'. Till then, nobody had found it necessary to add an adjective to the title of Soviet Champion. In a normal course of events, the top two players of 1940 would have played a match, and the winner would have been Soviet Champion until the 1941 Championship, slated to be played in August of that year. For Botvinnik, however, the obsession was a match with Alekhine for the world title. The failure to win the 12th championship had jeopardized Botvinnik's claims, and things had to be put right. So in December 1940 he sent a letter to the Chair of the Chess department of the All Union committee arguing, in effect, that, since both he and Keres had outstanding international achievements to their credit, the 1940 winners could not really be considered as 'proper champions'.

The letter had the desired effect. A couple of months later, an official communication announced that a new, hitherto unprecedented (and never to be repeated) event would be held to determine an 'absolute' champion. The players would be the top six of the 1940 championship, and they would play a match tournament in which each would confront the others four times. Half the tournament would take place in Moscow and half in Leningrad. It is hard to avoid the feeling that, while the others were taken completely by surprise at the sudden appearance of an event that would start at very short notice, Botvinnik was well prepared. The upshot was that Botvinnik took first place, Keres came second, and Lilienthal and Bondarevsky occupied the last two places. Certainly the quality of Botvinnik's play in the event cannot be disputed. He did perform better than the others and in that sense was a worthy winner. But 'that sense' is not the only sense through which things can be interpreted.

The strongest condemnation of the whole business perhaps emerged many decades later when Lilienthal published his autobiography. He noted that he had been away giving exhibitions in Siberia when, a bare one month before the Absolute tournament, he received a telegram informing him that such an event would take place. He pointed out that he had been fully in favour of a match with Bondarevsky although, had a standard Sonneborn-Berger tie break system been used, he would have had the superior score. More sharply, he also underlined that he had a plus score of 7-1 in individual encounters with Bondarevsky. In his view, therefore, the likely outcome of a match would have been a victory for himself. But he was a Hungarian! How could the Soviets permit such a person to be crowned Soviet champion? This is a theme which echoes through the whole history of Soviet championships, from Bronstein through Korchnoi and on to Kasparov. Those perceived, for whatever reasons, as 'outsiders' would always be looked upon askance. Far better, and certainly when it comes to the world title, to have a 'true Russian ' wearing the crown.

Despite the holding of the 'Absolute Championship' in early 1941, a regular 13th championship was still set for June 1941. Indeed, the first round of semi-finals did commence in mid-June. Just one week later, however, a fresh and ferocious foreign competitor entered the field. German operation Barbarossa shattered all of the careful calculations made by the Soviet authorities and the chess players. For the next three years the impacts of Hitler's onslaught would totally dominate proceedings. No championship was held, several truly talented players were killed, a number died of starvation, and the complexities of war altered the behaviour of the Soviet authorities towards many key players. In particular, Alekhine's dealings with the Nazi regime placed him more or less beyond the pale. Still more acutely, Keres came under intense suspicion because of his efforts to bring his wife and children out of Estonia. During this time, Botvinnik as an electrical engineer was spared from the front and some others, also quite legitimately, did not become directly involved in the fighting.

It was thus not until mid-1944 that the 13th championship actually took place. There were 17 participants (excluding Keres, for the reason stated above). Once more Botvinnik won by a clear margin, followed by Smyslov and Bondarevsky. Two new brilliant attacking players appeared for the first time, namely Bronstein and Tolush. The former had stunning results against the leading players, including a fine victory against Botvinnik, but was much less impressive against lower-ranked players. Overall, the standard of play was good and Botvinnik maintained, as did several others, that the years of war had if anything strengthened the Soviet masters. Be that as it may, the political squeeze against many players and others took its toll. Not least, in my view, was the elimination of that marvellous cartoonist, Yuzepchuk. His stream of brilliant drawings, going back over 20 years, had provided tremendous insight into both the chess struggles and the political battles. It is, I suppose, scarcely surprising that such a person would eventually become victim to the crippling 'orthodoxy' (better described as the Stalin cult) that effectively made 'out of the box' behaviour a sin that would cost you your life. But the spark he provided was irreplaceable.

Alexander Alekhine

The 13th championship ended mid June 1944 and the 14th began on June 1, 1945, right after the end of the war. In the intervening 12 months, the focus was on the question of the world championship. A chess conference in the Soviet Union had taken place, and that had passed a resolution, directed to the USA, UK and others, suggesting that the All Union Chess Section of the USSR 'take the initiative to draft the statute of the chess world championship upon itself'. Given that Alekhine was still alive (though of course irremediably stained because of his links to the Nazi regime) and that the USSR was not a member of FIDE, the only entity

Vasily Smyslov

formally eligible to strip Alekhine of the title, this 'initiative' amounted to what in modern business terms would be called a hostile IPO. Yet we should not be overly critical of the initiative, since it certainly was not a bolt of lightning in a clear sky. In that same year, 1944, Reuben Fine proposed a system for determining a world champion based on a match tournament, run as a quadruple or double round robin, with Botvinnik, Keres, Smyslov, Flohr from the Soviet side, Reshevsky and Fine from the American, and Alekhine himself. It seems that Fine telegraphed Botvinnik about the proposal and indeed contacted the Soviet authorities. Moreover, we also know that Keres had long considered that a closed tournament along the same lines would be the best way to proceed in the future. The point at stake, therefore, was whether Botvinnik would be able to challenge Alekhine directly, or whether a prior tournament should take place to determine Alekhine's opponent.

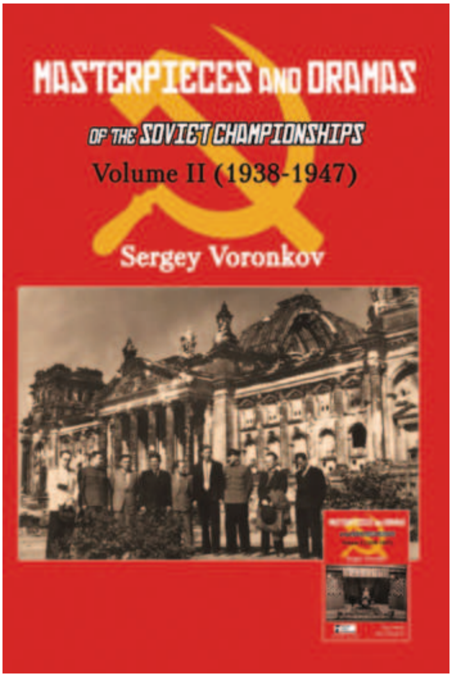
All this was ultimately blurred by Alekhine's death in March 1946 - an event which meant that a closed tournament was virtually inevitable. As a backcloth to the 14th Soviet championship, these activities were however of great relevance. On one side, the Soviet authorities wished to underline just how far the country was ahead in the chess world. And Botvinnik himself had the strongest interest in showing just how good he was. Both the country and the player achieved their aims. The qualifying process for the final ensured that the championship field would be incredibly strong. The 19 players (though since Flohr had to withdraw after just three rounds, the actual number was 18) only had one key omission, Keres. That was because there remained the questions related to Keres' return from Sweden in 1944 to his home in Estonia, then still occupied by the Nazi régime. Botvinnik's triumph was dazzling. His undefeated score of 15 from 17, a clear three points ahead of the field, must qualify as one of the finest tournament performances in the history of the game. He was followed by 'the three Bs' (Boleslavsky, Bronstein and Bondarevsky), with such players as Lilienthal, Ragozin, Smyslov and Tolush way behind. The standard of the games, judging from the selection presented by Voronkov, was very high, and in only one game does Botvinnik seem to have been in some difficulty (against Ragozin). A huge triumph for Botvinnik. In the period from 1938 to 1945, there had been four actual championships plus the Absolute tournament. Botvinnik had won four of those five events. In fairness, you could hardly ask for more.

The 14th championship effectively marks more than one watershed. The war was over, the régime set in stone, Botvinnik's position as established as it could be, and the making of arrangements for, and holding of, a match tournament to determine the future world chess champion just a matter of time. The last two chapters of the book effectively focus on Keres, with the first titled "The Keres Mystery' and the second 'The Keres Enigma'. The latter revolves very heavily around detailed research by Keres' biographer, Valter Heuer, supplemented by enquiries carried out by Voronkov himself. It seeks to clarify as much as possible what was really happening in the 1944-

1948 period when the Soviet authorities were concerned about whether Keres had collaborated in any way with the Nazi régime still controlling Estonia in the last months of the war. The main, and perhaps unsurprising finding, is that Botvinnik had certainly not sought to aid Keres in any way during these years of anguish. Probably, given the political atmosphere, this was as much a prudent measure of self-protection by Botvinnik as anything else. Despite his accomplishments in his scientific work, Botvinnik had always been, and always remained, a supremely dedicated and ambitious chess player for whom the title of world champion was the goal. To risk that by venturing into an area where he was certainly not in possession of much of the information would have been highly risky, to say the least.

The 15th championship took place in early 1947. From Botvinnik's angle, there was little to be gained from defending his title while waiting for the world championship tournament. Keres, on the other hand, was allowed to play. He won convincingly with 14 points from 19, in front of a field including the three Bs, Smyslov, Tolush, Ragozin, Lilienthal and Flohr. A check of the game results shows that 49% of the games were draws, a big increase from the one third percentage of just three years earlier. I note that, taking the 12th and 15th championships together, Bondarevsky lost only one game and Lilienthal two. The two players who had tied for the title back in 1940 clearly maintained an exceptional standard through the decade.

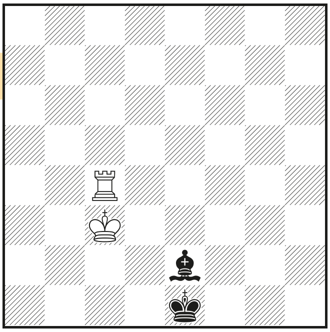
Voronkov's second volume maintains the incredible level set in the first volume, a work which has deservedly won plaudits throughout the chess world. Here the accent is different, and it has to be. The decade from the late 1930s till 1947 was momentous in world and Soviet history, and that context dictated most of what occurred over the board. Indeed, the 64 squares became a powerful mirror reflecting back onto the main stage. In a setting where so much emphasis was given, at least nominally, to the concept of the collective, it is an individual, Botvinnik, who dominates the scene. But there are many others who have major roles, and handle them superbly. If Soviet chess had a dominant position after the first 20 years, the next decade more than consolidated that. The rising tide of mastery continued to lift all boats, and as far as chess was concerned, more and more riches were produced. The Soviet state invested heavily to support an activity which became, in the parlance of economics, a 'national champion', and the individuals performing that activity became the world leaders, almost unchallenged. This wonderful book can therefore be read with profit by many who have no interest in chess but every interest in understanding how things work. It should be present not only in chess libraries, but in university history courses. Sometimes chess can take us further. And Voronkov shows how.



Endgame Studies

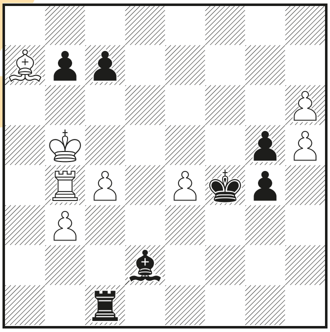
by Ian Watson
ian@irwatson.uk

1



M. Kovacevic
(after B. Haggqvist Tidskrift für Schack 1945)
Riga 2022
Add a white knight,
then White to play and **WIN**

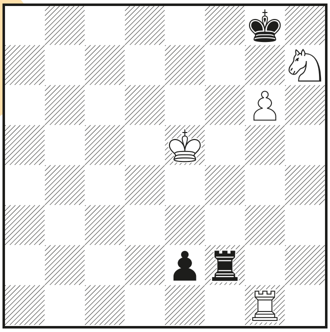
2



S. Nielsen

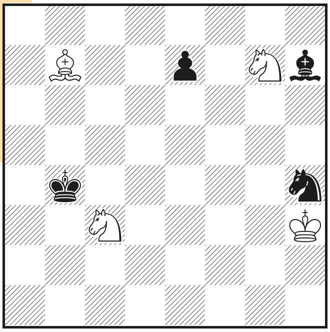
Riga Open 2022
WIN

3



M. Matous
Ceskoslovensky Sach 1997
WIN

4



N. Ryabinin
Kozlov-90 MT 1987
WIN

The European Championship…

… of solving, obviously. I was in Riga, Latvia, in mid-May, for the European Chess Solving Championship. The ECSC is an annual event, but not in 2020 or 2021, because of lockdowns; so, it was refreshing to meet familiar faces after the interregnum.

There is a team Championship for national sides, and an individual Championship, plus a warm-up event, the Open. Your solving challenge this month consists of two studies from the Open, and one from the ECSC. First, however, a completely new type: Add-a-piece solving. Marjan Kovacevic invented this recently, and he held an Add-a-piece solving tournament during the Riga events. You are given a position to which you have to add a piece to make it into a correct composition. You add a piece, on any square, but the resulting position must be sound. In the case of a study, that means the position must have a series of unique white moves that achieve the aim. In this one, you have to add a white knight and then White has to play and win. Your task is to both specify which square it is on and solve the study.

Both the Open and the individual European Championship were won by Danila Pavlov. He now wins more or less every solving tourney he enters, often with a perfect score of 100%. Unsurprisingly, therefore, he's the current World Champion too. Not bad for a nineteen-year-old. Will Danila dominate for a decade, as Magnus has done in OTB chess? Maybe not - there are other super strong juniors, such as Ilija Serafimovic from Serbia who came fourth in the Championship and is 17 years old.

Danila is Russian, but he was able to take part at Riga under a FIDE flag. There was, of course, no Russian squad in the team Championship. There was no Ukrainian team either, probably due to the Ukrainian government's not allowing men to leave the country. The team event was won by Serbia, for a record sixth time.

Our UK team underperformed, but three of us can fall back on the excuse of being old-timers. Our fourth, and younger, solver, David Hodge, did well in the Open, gaining third place and a Solving Grandmaster norm. If he does well at the World Championships in Dubai later this year, he will get the coveted title - 'coveted' because the Solving GM title is awarded to very few solvers. Perhaps our two former World Champions, Mestel and Nunn, will also take part, so we might be contenders for the team title.

After you've done the Add-a-piece position, the usual solving event procedures apply to the other three: you'll need to set up these positions on a board. In solving events, you can use a chess set and you can move the pieces to try and help you solve. You solve against the clock; for these studies give yourself an average of 30 minutes for each one, so 90 minutes in total. Your solutions are marked by the competition's supervisor. Points are awarded according to how much of the composer's solution you find, with five points available for each study if you find it all. In the answers, I'll show you where the points were awarded. You need to find the composer's main line; you can also write down sidelines if you're not sure what the main line is, but only the main line moves earn points. So, look for the most artistic, elegant line.

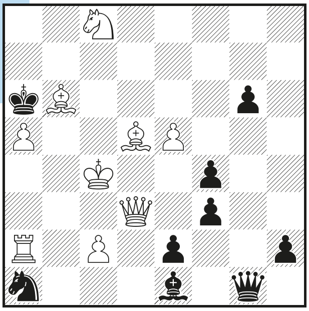
The solutions are on page 383.

PROBLEM WORLD

by Christopher Jones
cjajones1@yahoo.co.uk
Grandmaster of Chess Composition

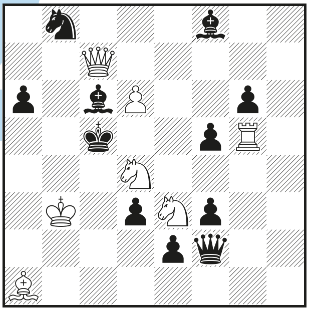
Solutions are given on page 382

1



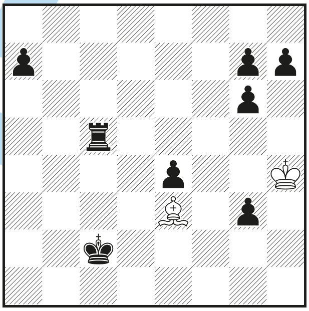
John Rice (Surbiton)
Mate in 2
ORIGINAL

2



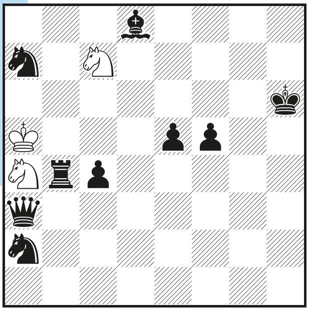
David Shire (Canterbury)
Mate in 2
ORIGINAL

3



Jorge Kapros (Argentina)
Helpstalemate in 6.5
ORIGINAL

4



Ljubomir Ugren (Slovenia)
Helpmate in 5 - 2 solutions
ORIGINAL

Openings for Amateurs

by Pete Tamburro; ptamburro@aol.com

QUIET BUT DEADLY

WHEREAS THE VIENNA COULD BE WILD THERE ARE QUIETER LINES THAT COULD FIT A PLAYER MORE COMFORTABLE IN THAT FORMAT

Years ago, a group of chess master friends of mine and I would meet for chess and inadvisable (for our waistlines) dining. Most of them had known Weaver Adams and studied and analysed his thoughts on the Bishop's Opening and the Vienna Game that he made famous in the *White to Play and Win* book - which I treasure to this day. I still have the reams of notes and analysis tables of that bygone era. Since both openings often transposed into each other, I got to learn two for the price of one, so to speak.

Whereas the Vienna could be wild, especially if it developed along the lines of the classical King's Gambit Declined lines or the Frankenstein-Dracula Variation, I also learnt that there were quieter, more controlled, lines that could fit a player more comfortable in that format. As the years progressed, the quieter lines started to gain a following.

Bent Larsen played a game along those lines that caused people to take notice. Today's game is that win. Larsen put it in his book of games with lengthy explanations. He annotated it for Chess Life, and Kmoch commented on it in Chess Review.

In recent years, Ovetchkin and Soloviov came out with The Modern Vienna Game, which fleshed out the possibilities of the quieter lines. Now some wit might say that this line is quiet but deadly because it lulls Black to sleep with the sheer boredom it induces, but, as Larsen showed, there is more to it than that. For as great an attacking player as Larsen was, he could take his time. He was in no hurry in this game. He got the opening he wanted and the pawn structure out of the opening he wanted, while Black could seemingly only sit there and wait for the slow drip of Larsen's positional technique to break through in a flood.

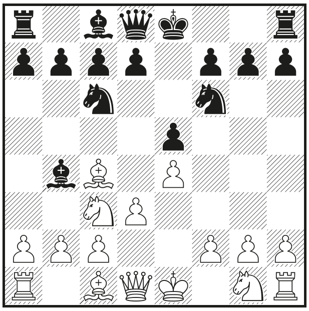
Bent **Larsen** – Levente **Lengyel** [C28]

Interzonal Amsterdam, 1964

1.e4 e5 2.♗c4 ♘f6 3.♘c3 ♘c6 Several authorities recommend 3...♗c5 with some interesting possibilities: 4.♘f3 *(4.d3 d6 5.♘a4 ♗d4 6.c3 ♗xf2+ 7.♔xf2 c6 8.♗b3 b5 9.h3 bxa4 10.♗xa4)* 4...d6 5.d3 0-0 6.♘a4 ♗d4 7.c3 ♗xf2+ 8.♔xf2 c6 9.♗b3 b5 10.h3 bxa4 11.♗xa4 ♕b6+ 12.♔g3= It can also get wild with White playing 4.f4, so Black plays to b4 to head to the line we see here.

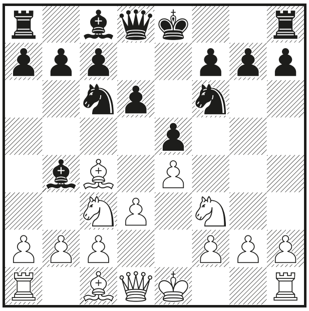
What’s also interesting is that Black didn’t feel like getting involved in the Frank-Drac with 3...♘xe4.

4.d3 ♗b4



5.♘f3 A fascinating decision by Larsen. Ovetchkin and Soloviov promote what they call the Hromadka Variation with 5.♘ge2 ♘a5 *(5...d6 6.0-0 ♗e6 7.♘d5! ♗xd5 8.exd5 ♘e7 9.♗g5 ♕d7 10.c3 ♗c5 11.d4 where O-S comment that ‘it seems very good for White to occupy immediately the centre, followed by a massive offensive all over the entire board.’; 5...0-0 6.0-0 d6 7.♗g5 ♗xc3 8.♘xc3 h6 9.♗xf6 ♕xf6 10.♘d5 ♕d8 11.f4 where White has the initiative.)* 6.a3! ♗xc3+ *(6...♘xc4 7.axb4 ♘b6 8.f4 d6 9.0-0 and both rooks have far more say in the game than Black’s.)* 7.♘xc3 ♘xc4 8.dxc4 and ‘White’s game is evidently more comfortable’.

5...d6

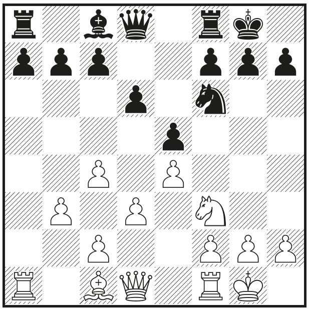


Larsen, in his book, wrote that he would have met 5...d5 with ’a very promising pawn sacrifice’ 6.exd5 ♘xd5 7.0-0 which he doesn’t elucidate on, but it was probably along the lines of 7...♘xc3 8.bxc3 ♗xc3 9.♘g5 f6 10.♘f7 ♕e7 11.♘xh8 ♗xa1 12.♗f7+ ♔d8 13.♕h5±.

6.0-0 ♗xc3 7.bxc3 ♘a5 Lengyel is following theory and Larsen is following his preference for an open a-file.

After 7...h6 White can play 8.d4 with a 4 Knights-like centre. Black shouldn’t take the e4 pawn because 8...♘xe4 9.dxe5 dxe5 10.♕xd8+ ♔xd8 11.♗xf7 ♗g4 12.♘h4 ♖f8 13.♗d5 ♘xc3 14.♗xc6 bxc6 15.f3 and Black’s pawns are more of a mess and the black king is more exposed. Not decisive, but annoying.

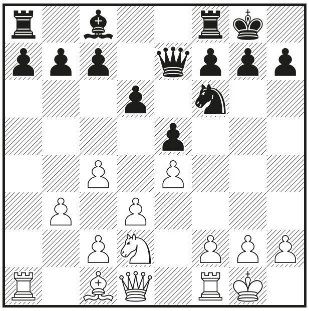
8.♗b3 ♘xb3 9.axb3 0-0 10.c4



A revealing position. Larsen aimed for this. As Kmoch noted: ‘White has a tiny edge because of the chance to start action with either f4 or d4. The Bishops of opposite colours exert no neutralizing effect for the time being.’ And, in the meantime, the big question is: what does Black do for counterplay, since the thematic d5 freeing idea is a long way off?

10...♕e7 Larsen gives his game against Gligoric from an earlier round: 10...b6 11.♕e2 ♘d7 12.♗g5 f6 13.♗e3 ♖e8 14.♘d2 ♘f8 15.f4 ‘with a slight initiative for White’.

11.♘d2



Larsen: ‘But is the position equal? I would not like to play Black. The opposite-coloured bishops do not guarantee a draw as long as there are other pieces on the board. What I like is that White has the best centre pawns! The two exchanges have brought two white pawns a step closer to the centre. It may be very little, but I am satisfied with this small advantage. It annoyed me that Gligoric had obtained a draw; now I had another try.’ As I’ve written many times, equal does not mean drawn. Larsen is telling us that he has enough little advantages to build them into something better: the open a-file, the lock on d5 and the rook-backed f4 thrust. Black’s defence is arduous.

Bent Larsen

11...♘d7 12.♕h5 ♘c5 13.f4 Larsen: ‘This important advance must be carried out before the black knight gets to e6.’

13...exf4 14.♖xf4 ♕e5 It’s still equal and Larsen exchanges queens! What’s he thinking?

15.♕xe5 dxe5 16.♖f2 ♘e6 17.♘f3 Also possible were 17.♗b2 and; 17.♗a3.

17...f6 18.♗e3 a6 Larsen notes that White ‘still has the better pawn centre. It should also be noted that Black has very opportunities to undertake something active.’ This is a very instructive way of looking at this grandmaster’s positional play. The pawn structure coming out of the opening is still dictating the opportunities for White and the lack of opportunities for Black. Now Larsen sets about improving his position - a fine lesson in technique.

19.♘h4 ♗d7 Except for one little glitch, Black could equalise with 19...a5 20.♖ff1 ♗d7 21.♖a3? *(Here’s the glitch: the rook should protect the c2 pawn from Nd4 in the other line. Attention to detail. 21.♖a2! b6 22.♖fa1 c5 23.♘f5 ♖ae8 24.b4 axb4 25.♖a7)* 21...b6 22.♖fa1 c5 23.♘f5 ♖ae8 24.♘d6 ♖e7 25.♘f5 ♖ee8 26.♗f2 ♘d4 Although there were lots of other moves in both lines here, I just wanted to demonstrate parallel lines to show what a seemingly unimportant ♖a2 or ♖a3 decision is. That's what all that time on the clock is for!

20.♘f5 ♖ae8 21.h3 ♖f7 22.♔h2 Or right away: 22.g4

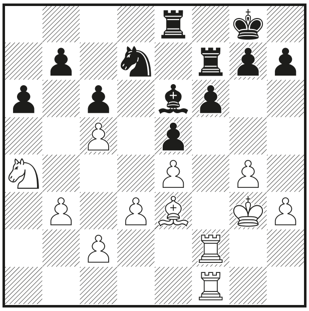
22...♘f8 23.g4 ♘g6 24.♘g3 Even 24.h4 h6 25.♔g3

24...♘e7 25.♖af1 My first thought was, 'Egad, a minority attack!?'

25...♗e6 26.♘e2 Larsen: 'Were you expecting 26.g5? It accomplishes very little and leads to exchanges. The whole impressive build-up on the King's side had as its first purpose to make sure that Black does not play f5.' Prophylaxis! It may be a leisurely pace, but it is slowly suffocating as well. Can Black keep the pillow off his head?

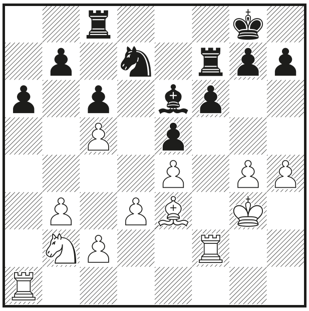
26...♘c6 27.♔g3 ♘b8 28.♘c3 c6 Keeps the knight out (thus the ♘b8 move), but creates a new hole.

29.c5 ♘d7 30.♘a4



Attacking dark-square weaknesses using the pawn, bishop and knight, while the white pawns also limit the dark- squared bishop. The opening pawn structure still has a say in the game. Does this sort of patient and methodical play appeal to you? We will address why it should be considered in our closing remarks.

30...♖d8 31.h4 ♖df8 32.♘b2 ♖c8 33.♖a1!!

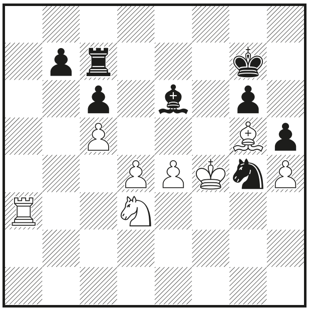


The start of a remarkable and not often seen manoeuvre. Larsen writes that he wants to play d4, and will need the rook to protect the b-pawn because the c-pawn will be supporting d4, and then notes that Black's pieces just get in each other's way because of the lack of space and counterplay.

33...♔f8 34.♖a4 ♔e8 35.♖b4 ♖c7 36.c3 g6? Larsen pointed out ♔d8 as better and says he would have just kept up the pressure but wait for adjournment to work out a specific plan!
37.d4 Another possibility is 37.♘c4 which would force Black to give up his bishop for the knight.

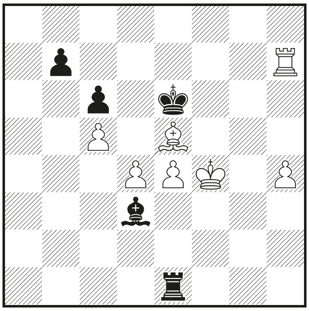
37...h5 38.g5 fxg5 39.♗xg5 White now has an effective pawn majority from the e-file over.

39...exd4 40.♖xf7 ♔xf7 41.cxd4 ♘f6 42.♔f4 a5 43.♖a4 ♗xb3 44.♖xa5 ♘g4 45.♖a3 ♗e6 46.♘d3 ♔g7



47.♘e5! This nails down the big advantage. Black can't take the knight because of ♔xe5. Larsen keeps adding to the edge until his very lovely last shot of the game.

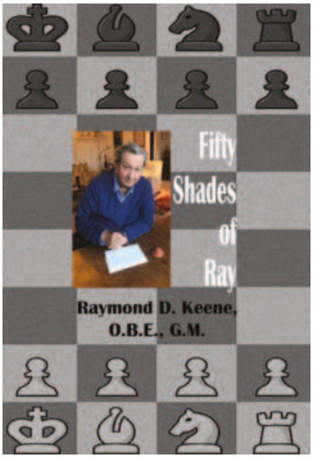
47...♖c8 48.♗e7 ♖e8 49.♗d6 ♘xe5 50.♗xe5+ ♔f7 51.♔g5 ♗g4 52.♖a1 ♖e6 53.♖b1 ♖e7 54.♖f1+ ♔e8 55.♔xg6 ♔d7 56.♖f4 ♗e2 57.♗d6 ♖e6+ 58.♔g5 ♗d3 59.♗e5 ♗e2 60.♖f2 ♗d3 61.♔f4 ♖g6 62.♔e3 ♗c4 63.♖f5 ♖g1 64.♖xh5 ♖e1+ 65.♔f4 ♗d3 66.♖h7+ ♔e6



67.d5+! cxd5 68.exd5+ ♔xd5 69.♖d7+ Black resigned.

1-0

Games that are equal and 69 moves long are not everybody's cup of tea; however, this style of play may be worth it to those amateurs who are more comfortable with a more sedate and controlled game. There is an additional key factor in all this. Although there are a number of 'equal' chess engine suggestions, not only does it not mean drawn, but how many of your fellow amateurs would have the patience to defend something like this? Whereas Larsen's plan was reasonably able to be understood and carried out, Black had not found a plan, and Lengyel was a strong grandmaster. Do also remember the role that the pawn centre played from the opening to the endgame. A memorable and instructive game.



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Fifty Shades
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Chess in the year of the
Coronavirus Pandemic

Raymond D. Keene

*With an Introduction
by CJ de Mooi*

Image source: TASS

Yury (Yuri) Lvovich Averbakh

(08 February 1922 Kaluga - 07 May 2022 Moscow)

By James Pratt

Yury Averbakh, who passed away in Moscow, was one of the greatest Soviet and world grandmasters of the 20th century, and the last surviving player of the famous 1953 Zurich chess tournament.

He was born into a world that flowed along very differently from our own. Kaluga was his city, but don't reach for that atlas, just follow the River Oka in central Russia, setting your clock to a time when - as Trotsky was to write - Lenin was a hopelessly sick man. Averbakh bore some little German and Jewish blood, grew to be a tall and scholarly man (headmasterly?) but played chess under the banner of hammer and sickle.

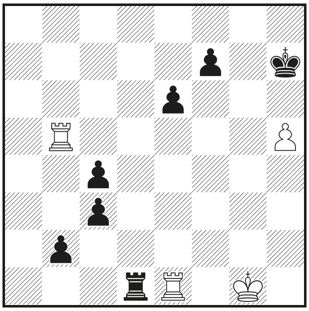
Born just over one hundred years ago, Averbakh was the oldest holder of the International Grandmaster title. Already - he got the title of national master in 1943 - he was looking at chess not so much as a life substitute (as a Tal or Fischer might have done) but more as a career from which possibilities would spring, in the manner (say) of his contemporary, Smyslov. He played in Soviet Championships 1948-70, winning the title in Kiev in 1954 and tying for first place at Leningrad, 1956.

Efim **Geller** – Yury **Averbakh**

USSR Ch, Kiev, 1954

The young Geller, as well versed in book lines as any, steers away from open, theoretical, lines as early as move three. A surprise Efim Petrovich may later have had cause to regret. I take my cue from that charming book, *A Gnat May Drink* by Jonathan Hinton.

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d3 g6 4.g3 ♗g7 5.♗g2 d6 6.0-0♘f6 7.♘bd2 0-0 8.a4 ♗d7 9.♘c4 d5!? 10.exd5 ♘xd5 11.♖e1 ♕c7 12.♘g5 ♘b6 13.♘e3 a5 14.h4 h6 15.♘e4 ♘d4 16.h5!? g5 17.c3 ♘f5 18.♕b3 ♘d6 19.♘d5 ♘xd5 20.♕xd5 ♘xe4 21.♕xe4 ♖ab8 22.♕d5 e6 23.♕a2 ♗c6 24.♕c4 ♗xg2! 25.♔xg2 ♕c6+ 26.♕e4 ♖fd8! 27.♗e3 ♖d5! 28.♖ad1? ♖bd8? 29.♔f1 c4 30.d4 ♕xa4 31.g4 ♕d7 32.♖a1 a4 33.♖e2 b5 34.♖ae1 b4! 35.f4 gxf4 36.♗xf4 a3! 37.♖g2 ♕e7! 38.♕e3! ♕f6 39.♔g1axb2! 40.g5 hxg5 41.♗e5 ♖xe5 42.dxe5 ♕xe5! 43.♕xe5 ♗xe5 44.♖xg5+ ♔h7 45.♖gxe5 bxc3 46.♖b5 ♖d1!! ‘Time for a diagram’ as old Chernev enjoyed saying.



0-1

He was 5th= in the 1952 Interzonal and, a year later, Averbakh just failed to finish on 50% in the celebrated Candidates of ’53. He drew a training match with Botvinnik himself in 1957.

He also had a lot of international success - Dresden 1956, Hastings 1959/60 and such as Vienna 1961, Bucharest 1971 and the Rubinstein Memorial in 1975, so happily reported in *Shakmaty* (Riga)!

Averbakh became known for his endgame books but he wrote on all aspects of the game, maybe twenty books flowing from his pen. Wade called him ‘prodding organiser’ and there is no doubt he touched so many areas of the game as a linguist, arbiter, diplomat, much in the manner of Euwe.

He was Chairman of the USSR Chess Federation 1973-78 and was also active as a journalist. He was second to Smyslov in the 1983 Candidates in London.

As a player he gave his name to lines in the King’s Indian and emerged with lifetime plus-scores against Petrosyan and Polugayevsky and was an occasional player right up until the 1990’s.

Reluctantly, I am forced to agree with Ray Keene that his death was probably hastened by the terrible war in the Ukraine.

Here is a game to enjoy from his last playing years:

Vladimir **Bagirov** – Yury **Averbakh**

USSR Cup, Jurmala, 1980

This won the Best Theoretical Novelty in *Informator* 29. Several judges gave it full marks. But see what you think:

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.e3 0-0 5.♗d3 c5 6.d5 (‘?!’ - Larsen)

6…b5 7.dxe6 bxc4!? Deviating from Games 6 and 17 of the Karpov-Korchnoi WC Match, 1978.

8.exf7+ ♔h8 9.♗xc4 d5 10.♗d3 ♘c6 Pretty obvious. 10…d4 preserves a little mystery.

11.♘ge2 d4 12.exd4 cxd4 13.♗b5 ♕b6! 14.♗xc6 dxc3 15.bxc3 ♗xc3+ 16.♘xc3 ♕xc6 17.♘e2 Better than playing the queen to f3 when 17...♕c4! leaves Black very much ahead.

17…♕xg2? Bagirov prefers 17…♗h3 but, even still, the fun is not over.

18.♖g1 ♕e4 19.♕d4 ♖xf7 20.♕xe4 ♘xe4 21.♗e3 ♗a6 22.♖c1 ♖e8 23.♘f4 h6 24.h4 g5 25.hxg5

½-½

SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS

This month’s originals

First, an explanatory word about the problem from a new contributor, Jorge Kapros (welcome, Jorge!). Regular readers will be familiar with the concept of helpmates (such as Ljubomir’s in this issue): Black and White collaborate to create a position in which Black is checkmated. In a helpstalemate the difference is that the object of the collaboration is to reach a position in which Black is stalemated. In Jorge’s example, the reference in the stipulation to a half-move means that it is White that begins the sequence of moves, delivering stalemate on his seventh move. After all that, the other problems are all straightforward - to describe, that is; not necessarily to solve…! In each of the two two-movers, there is a tempting try to consider.

A royal battery…

…is problem buffs’ description of the prominent feature in John’s diagram. Any move by the white king would fire the battery and achieve mate, but as matters stand there is no such move available. So White tries to make a square available for the white king. One way to do this is to play 1.c3, threatening 2.♔b4. Black has various ways to prevent 2.♔b4 that fail against different mates: 1…♕xb6 2.axb6; 1…♘c2 2.♔b3; and 1…♗xc3 2.♔xc3. However, 1…♕e3! is a successful defence. So attention switches to 1.♗d4, threatening 2.♔c5. Again Black has four defences, but this time they all fail - 1…♕xd4+ to 2.♔xd4, 1…♗b4 to 2.♔xb4, 1…♘b3 to 2.♔xb3, and (very neatly) the erstwhile refutation, 1…♕e3, to 2.♕xg6!. A less-than-obvious feature of ♗b6>d4 is to open the line a6-g6, and White exploits the fact that the black queen has now unguarded g6.

Which knight is it?

By coincidence the second problem last month, also by David, had the same heading. This time it is fairly obvious at a glance that White will capture at f5, threatening a host of discovered mates. The big question is: which knight? You’ll know the answer after my next sentence, because as usual we’re starting with the one that doesn’t (quite) work! Consider 1.♘4xf5. There are now six squares to which the knight could move to administer mate, and it is a delight to find that Black has defences that force each of these mates - 1…♔b5 2.♘d4; 1…♗e7 2.♘xe7; 1…♗g7 2.♘xg7; 1…♗h6 2.♘xh6; 1…♕h4 2.♘xh4; and four other queen moves that are met by 2.♘ (x)g3. In fact there is a full set of knight mates because we can add 1…♕xe3 2.♘xe3 and 1…♗xd6 2.♘xd6 (a change from 1…♗xd6 2.♕a7! in the diagram position)! A complete knight tour. However, there is one defence that succeeds: 1…♘d7!. So we go to 1.♘3xf5!. After this, we again have the full knight tour, many of the variations repeating those from the try. The new variations are 1…♔d5 2.♘g3, 1…♕xd4 2.♘xd4 and 1…♘d7 (the erstwhile refutation) 2.♕xc6. (I do admire the way that the decision as to which knight is to go to f5 hinges, improbably, on the need to maintain the guard of the d4 knight on c6!).

This tremendous task achievement is not totally unprecedented. David cites some earlier examples which however don’t have his *flight-giving* key and try (relinquishing control respectively of d5 and b5). It will be for the judge of our 2022-23 tourney, Hans Gruber, to decide the extent (if any) to which earlier examples diminish the status of David’s work.

(See page 374)

The first helpstalemate in BCM?

Well, Jorge's problem is the first since I've been editing Problem World (2012). If you have tried solving it you will have found that in order to neutralise Black's considerable arsenal we need to either capture, block or pin each black unit. Thankfully, it's not only a case of capturing pieces (that mundane option can't be achieved in the specified number of moves) but instead we have to pin the black rook, after precisely orchestrated journeys by the white bishop and the black king - 1…♗f4 2.♔d3 ♗b8 3.♔e3 ♗xa7 4.♔f4 ♔h3 5.♔g5 ♔xg3 6.♔h6 ♔h4 7.♖g5 e3=.

… More familiar help-play…

Well, more familiar to regular readers who are acquainted with Ljubomir's challenging long helpmates in which it is at least the case that the end result is to be a checkmate (not a stalemate!). In this month's fine example there are two distinct cleverly determined move sequences that achieve the desired result - 1.♖b6 ♔xb6 2.♕f3 ♔c5 3.♔g5 ♔xc4 4.♔f4 ♘d5+ 5.♔e4 ♘c5 and 1.♗e7 ♘e8 2.♖b8 ♘d6 3.♖g8 ♔b6 4.♔g7 ♘c5 5.♔f8 ♘e6. Congratulations if you found either!

SOLUTIONS TO ENDGAMES

(See page 372)

Add-a-piece

Add a white knight on d1. The solution is then 1.♖b4 ♗xd1 2.♖b1 ♔e2 3.♖a1 ♔e1 4.♔d3 wins.

If you add the white knight on f2, then White has two ways to win (1.♖f4 or 1.♘d3+) so the study is unsound. Adding it on d3 is illegal because it checks the black king but it is White to move.

Nielsen

1.h7 ♗c3 2.e5 (1 point) **♗xe5 3.♗d4** (+1 point = 2) **♗xd4 4.c5** (+1=3) **♖xc5+ 5.♔a4 b5+ 6.♔a5** (+1=4) **♖c4 7.bxc4 c5 8.cxb5** (+1=5) wins, e.g. 8…cxb4 9.b6 b3 10.b7 etc.

The main sidelines are: 1.e5? ♖h1 2.e6 ♔f5; 1.♗d4? ♖h1; 3.♗b8? ♖h1; 3.c5+? ♔f3/♔f5; 6.♔a3? ♖c4 7.bxc4 c5 8.cxb5 cxb4+; 7…♗e5 8.♖xb5; 8.♖b1? bxc4.

Matous

1.♘f6+ ♔g7 2.♘e8+ (1 point) **♔h6 3.g7 ♖f1 4.♖g6+** (+1 point = 2) **♔h5 5.♘f6+** (+1=3) **♖xf6 6.♔xf6 e1♕ 7.♖g5+** (+1=4) **♔h6 8.g8♘+** (+1=5) wins, 8…♔h7 9.♔f7.

Sidelines: 2.♘h5+? ♔h6 3.g7 ♖f1 4.♖g6+ ♔xh5 5.♖g5+ ♔h4 6.♖g4+ ♔h3 7.♖g3+ ♔h4; 2…♔g8 3.g7 e1♕ 4.♖xe1 ♖g2 5.♖h1 ♔f7 6.♖h8; 3…♖g2 4.♖h1+ ♖h2 5.♖xh2+ ♔g6 6.g8♕: 4…♔xg6 5.g8♕+ ♔h6 6.♕g7+ ♔h5 7.♘f6+ ♖xf6 8.♔xf6; 5.♖g5+? ♔h4 6.♖g4+ ♔h3 7.♖e4 e1♕ 8.♖xe1 ♖xe1+.

Ryabinin

1.♘d5+ ♔c5 2.♘e6+ (0.5 point) ♔d6 3.♘g5 (+0.5 point = 1) ♗g8 4.♘e4+ (+0.5=1.5) ♔e5 5.♘xe7 (+0.5=2) ♗h7 6.♘g5 (+0.5=2.5) ♘f5 7.♘c6+ (+0.5=3) ♔d6 8.♘xh7 (+0.5=3.5) ♔c7 9.♗a8 (+0.5=4) ♘d6 10.♘e5 (+0.5=4.5) ♘b7 11.♘d7 (+0.5=5) wins.

Notice the pleasing 'switchback' by the black bishop and the white knight visiting g5 twice.

I wrote down the solution up to 9.♗a8, thinking I'd got all the points, but I missed that Black can play his knight to b7 threatening then to attack the white bishop with his king. So, another point down the drain…

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